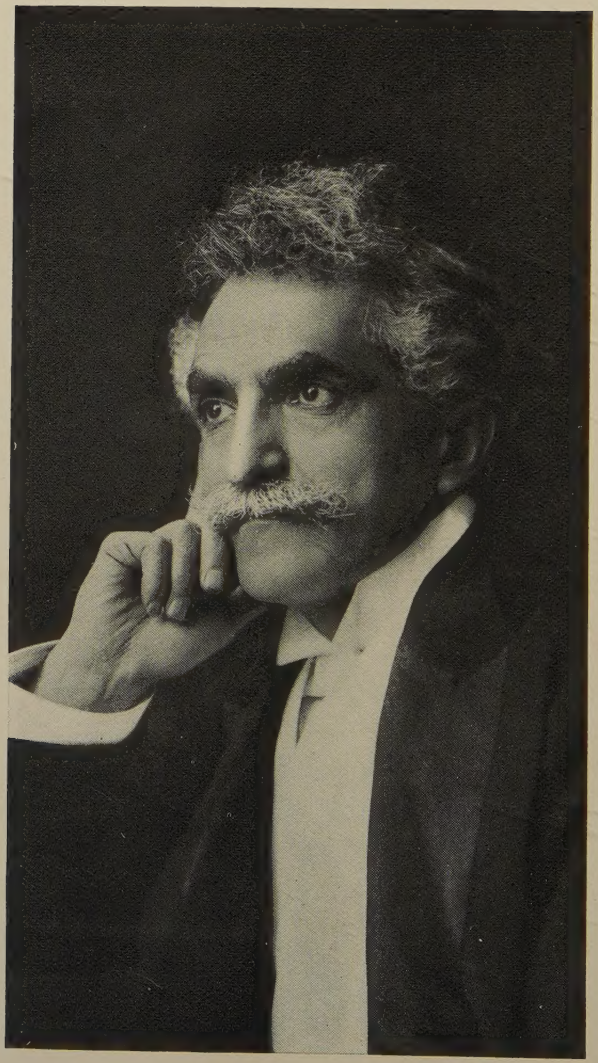
A NEW CATECHISM

BY

M. M. MANGASARIAN

We baptize the twentieth century in the name of Peace, Liberty and Progress! We christen her—the People's Century. We ask of the new century a Religion without superstition; Politics without war; Science and the arts without materialism; and Wealth without misery or wrong!



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BY

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"Our growing thought makes growing revelation."—GEORGE ELIOT.

"Believe it, my good friends, to love truth for truth's sake, is the principal part of human perfection in this world and the seed-plot of all other virtues."—LOCKE.

SIXTH EDITION

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PREFACE

The old Catechisms which were imposed upon us in our youth—when our intelligence could not defend itself against them—no longer command our respect.

They have become mildewed with neglect. The times in which they were conceived and composed are dead—quite dead!

A New Catechism to express the thoughts of men and women and children living in these new times is needed.

This is a modest effort in that direction.

"*How a rational man that should enquire and know for himself can content himself with a faith or belief taken upon trust, or with such a servile submission of his understanding as to admit all and nothing else but what fashion makes passable among men, is to me astonishing.*"—LOCKE.

CONTENTS

CHAP.		PAGE
I.	Reason and Revelation	9
II.	The Christian Revelation	23
III.	The Canon of the Bible	33
IV.	God	49
V.	The Earth	65
VI.	Man	73
VII.	Jesus	85
VIII.	The Teachings of Jesus	95
IX.	The Church	111
X.	The Liberal Church	123
XI.	The Creeds	133
XII.	The Clergy	145
XIII.	Prayer and Salvation	151
XIV.	Death	163
XV.	Immortality	169
XVI.	The Ten Commandments	179
XVII.	The Church and the Republic	193
XVIII.	Christianity and Woman	203
XIX.	Marriage	217
XX.	The Church and Marriage	227
XXI.	Divorce and the Church	237
XXII.	The Chief End of Man	251

INTRODUCTION

TO FOURTH AMERICAN EDITION

The author has been greatly encouraged by the reception accorded to his little book both in this country and in Europe. Translations of the book have introduced it into France, Spain, Italy and Belgium. No effort is made to conceal the satisfaction which the author feels in the success of *A New Catechism.*

In bringing out a fourth edition of the present work in this country, the following six chapters have been added:

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.
THE CHURCH AND THE REPUBLIC.
CHRISTIANITY AND WOMAN.
MARRIAGE.
THE CHURCH AND MARRIAGE.
DIVORCE AND THE CHURCH.

Having been a Presbyterian minister in former years, the author claims a first-

hand acquaintance with the religious topics which the *Catechism* covers.

While distinguished scientists like Marcellin Berthelot, of France, and authors like George Jacob Holyoake, of England, have been most generous with their appreciations, the orthodox clergy have received the book with silence.

When a Faith declines the challenge of science and progressive thought, and holds her tongue instead of answering the questions addressed to her, it is not only an unmistakable acknowledgment of her inability to answer them, but also a sure sign that she has fallen "into the sear and yellow leaf."

The only public criticism of *A New Catechism* from the orthodox church in America came from the editors of the New York *Outlook*, who charged the author with being "guilty of bald literary falsehood." A perusal of the little pamphlet on "Orthodox Attacks," in which is given the correspondence between myself and the editors of the *Out-*

look, and wherein is shown how the editors of the *Outlook* resort to epithets when arguments fail them, will fully vindicate *A New Catechism*.

We invite criticisms both from friends and opponents. If criticism is just, it will help us to correct our mistakes; if unjust, it cannot hurt us.

With sincere pleasure the author takes this opportunity to express his deep gratitude to the translators of the book, Messrs. Le Clere de Pulligny, of Paris, Tomaso Mabie, of Madrid, Dr. F. Zani, of Rome, and the Rationalist Press Association, of London, England. Much thanks are also due to those Professors of the Sorbonne, in Paris, and to the English reviewers, whose recommendations have secured so large a circle of readers abroad for *A New Catechism*.

M. M. MANGASARIAN.

Chicago, 1906.

CHAPTER I

REASON AND REVELATION

1. Q. What is religion?
   A. Faith in the truth.[1]
2. Q. Define truth.
   A. It is the most perfect knowledge attainable concerning any given question.[2]
3. Q. What is meant by "faith in the truth"?
   A. Confidence that such knowledge may be depended upon for the highest ends of life.

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[1] Truth is defined by Thomas Aquinas as "*adaequatio intellectus et rei.*" Kirchhoff defines knowledge as a "description of facts." (See Carus' Primer of Philosophy pp. 37 and 46.)

[2] Knowledge reveals things as they are: hence, truth, which is the highest knowledge is the reflection of reality. "Wisdom," says Schopenhauer, "is not merely theoretical, but also practical perfection; it is the ultimate true cognition of all things in mass and in detail, which has so penetrated man's being that it appears as the guide of all his actions." Arthur Schopenhauer. Zimmern.

4. Q. How can one demonstrate his faith in the truth?

   A. By lifting his conduct to the height of his clearest vision or knowledge.

5. Q. How may truth, or the "most perfect knowledge" be acquired?

   A. Through experience and study.

6. Q. Is there no other way?

   A. There is not.

7. Q. Have you given me the generally accepted definition of religion?

   A. No. According to popular opinion religion is what a man believes concerning supernatural beings and what he does to obtain their favor.

8. Q. What is the supernatural?

   A. Whatever is at present inexplicable by the known laws of nature.

9. Q. What is the proper attitude of mind toward all such questions?

A. We should not quarrel about them, but permit them to be discussed freely.

10. Q. Does not "revelation" or the "word of God" teach us many things which we could not otherwise know?

A. As there are many "revelations" we should first decide which one we have reference to.

11. Q. Name some of them.

A. The Zoroastrian; Brahman; Buddhist; Jewish; Christian; Mohammedan; Mormon———

12. Q. Do all these "revelations" or bibles claim a divine origin?

A. They do.

13. Q. Do they respect one another?

A. On the contrary each condemns the other as unreliable or incomplete.

14. Q. How?

A. Buddha is reported to have said: "There is no one else like unto me on earth or in heaven. I alone am the perfect Buddha." [1]

15. Q. Give another example.

A. Jesus has been quoted as saying: "I am the door of the sheep—all that came before me are *thieves* and *robbers*. . . . No one cometh unto the father but by me." [2]

16. Q. What would be considered a stronger proof than these?

A. The fact that the disciples of each are trying to convert those of the others.[3]

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[1] Oldenberg, "Buddha."

[2] Gospel of John. It is possible that neither Jesus nor Buddha ever expressed these narrow sentiments.

[3] "This true Catholic faith out of which no one can be saved." From the creed of Pope Pius IV. "I detest every . . . sect opposed to the holy Catholic and Apostolic Roman Church." Words used for the reception of Protestants into the Catholic church—Catholic Belief, p. 254. This same spirit prevails in the standard Protestant creeds. (See chapter on Prayer and Salvation.)

17. Q. What does it mean to "convert"?

A. To make others think and believe precisely as we do.

18. Q. What is the motive?

A. Among others, this, that unless people believe as we do, they shall be damned forever.

19. Q. Which of these different Revelations is the true one?

A. Not one of them is either wholly true or wholly false.

20. Q. How are we to know what is true and what is false in them?

A. By using our best judgment.

21. Q. Would not that imply that reason was a higher authority than revelation?

A. Unquestionably.

22. Q. If we possess the highest authority within ourselves, do we still need a revelation?

A. We do not; for a Revelation must approve itself to our reason before it can be accepted.

23. Q. If you believed a certain book to contain the "word of God," would you not obey it implicitly whether your reason approved of it or not?

A. No.

24. Q. And why?

A. If I obeyed it blindly, my obedience would have no merit; if under compulsion, it would not be voluntary obedience. But if I obey it intelligently and with the approval of my reason, then it would be my reason and not the book that I would be obeying.

25. Q. Give an illustration.

A. If any of the "bibles" of the world were to teach, for instance, that the earth was flat, we could not believe them, because our own experience and study teach us the very opposite.

26. Q. If, however, "revelation" should command you to do what your

reason condemned as *wrong*, would you not obey the "word of God" rather than your reason?

A. If I do what my best judgment forbids, I cannot be a moral being.

27. Q. Is it not possible to regard as true what reason recognizes to be wrong?

A. It is impossible. Reason is absolute sovereign. *No power can compel her to assume as true what she has declared to be untrue.*

28. Q. But do any of these "bibles" really teach things contrary to reason?

A. They certainly do.

29. Q. What, for instance?

A. The creation story.

30. Q. Give another example.

A. The deluge.

31. Q. Give one more example.

A. The fall of man.

32. Q. What do we know to-day as to these questions?

A. We know for sure that there never was any "fall of man," or "universal deluge," or "creation" such as these ancient bibles announce.

33. Q. What other mistakes do these bibles make?

A. They make many other mistakes in history and science; they contradict themselves in many places and in more than one instance they teach what we know to be wicked.[1]

34. Q. How do you account for these mistakes in the bibles?

A. It is human to err.

35. Q. Are they all the work of man?

A. They are nothing more than the record of the wisdom and folly —the virtues and vices of man.

[1] "They contradict each other's chronology, genealogy, geography; and whole substance of both natural and supernatural events; they stand at variance with authentic secular history."—James Martineau, Essays, Reviews, etc.

36. Q. What are we to do under these circumstances?

A. Follow the best light we have.

37. Q. What is that?

A. Our reason.

38. Q. But may not our reason lead us into error?

A. Yes.

39. Q. Why follow it then?

A. Because we have nothing better and it is our duty to follow the best light we possess.[1]

40. Q. Why do people attach so great an importance to Revelation?

A. For fear that without a Revelation there would be no morality.

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[1] "Lost at nightfall in a forest, I have but a feeble light to guide me. A stranger happens along: 'Blow out your candle,' he says, 'and you will see your way the better.' That stranger is a theologian."—Diderot.

"All religions have demanded the sacrifice of reason. The religion of the future will make that terrible sacrifice unnecessary." Consult the author's pamphlet on "Religion of the Future," p. 6.

41. Q. Is there any reason for such a fear?

A. No. In the name of Revelation or the "Word of God" many of the worst crimes have been perpetrated,[1] while on the other hand not a few of the world's

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[1] Theodore de Beza, the successor of John Calvin, as leader of the Reformed Church, of Geneva, publicly praised Poltrote, the assassin of Francis, a Catholic prince, and promised him a luminous crown in heaven. John Calvin himself, in the name of the "Word of God," condemned Servetus to the flames. The assassin of Henry the Third, of France, received almost divine honors at the hands of the Catholics. His name was introduced into the litanies of the church, his portrait exhibited on the holy altar; and his dastardly deed likened to the holy mysteries of Religion. The mother of Clement, the assassin, came to Paris to demand a reward for the crime of her son and the priests took up a collection for her and carried her in procession as the blessed woman who had given birth to the murderer of a king who favored the heretics.—Comp. Esprit de la Ligue, Estoile, vol. III, p. 94; also, Jules Simon, La Liberte de Conscience, pp. 86, 87.

Many similar examples could easily be given to show that a revelation has, instead of curbing the passions, frequently made them more violent. All the bloodshed recorded in the Old Testament was committed with a "And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, etc."

noblest men knew nothing of a Revelation.[1]

42. Q. Has there always been a Revelation in the world?

A. No; it is believed that it was only given some five thousand years ago.

43. Q. Was there no morality in the world before that date?

A. There was, undoubtedly; for men, societies and nations existed long before then.

44. Q. Was a Revelation given to each and every nation on earth?

A. No; the general belief is that the Jews were the only people who were favored with a Revelation.

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[1] Socrates, Phocion, Epaminondas, Epictetus, Marcus Aurelius and many others of pagan times. Of Chilon, one of the seven sages of Greece, it is recorded that, at his deathbed, he summoned his friends, to whom he declared that in a long life he could recall but a single act that saddened his dying hour. It was that, in an unguarded hour, he had permitted friendship to obscure his sense of justice.

45. Q. Were the Jews then the only moral people of the world?

A. By no means; the Greeks, who had no Revelation, were the most advanced people of antiquity.

46. Q. What does that signify?

A. That morality is independent of a Revelation.

47. Q. Is it well to teach that morality is impossible without a Revelation?

A. It is not; because, in the first place it would not be true; and, because in the second place, people, in losing faith in Revelation, would also lose faith in the right.

48. Q. How may faith in the right become permanent?

A. By loving and doing the right for its own sake.

49. Q. What are the other motives to right conduct?

A. The strongest are those which

arise from a craving for self-esteem, the altruistic impulse,[1] and the sense of duty.

50. Q. What is meant by "the sense of duty?"

A. The feeling that we ought to do those things which *increase* life, and make it beautiful, and to refrain from those things which bring shame and misery and wrong in their train.

51. Q. Is it always pleasant to do our duty?

A. The old religions teach that duty is "a cross" and that to be good is to sacrifice ourselves.

52. Q. What is the consequence of such teaching?

A. It makes people afraid of the good life and associates it in their mind with gloom and depression.

[1] To respect ourselves we must respect humanity, of which we are a part, and when we confer value upon ourselves we confer value also upon our race.

53. Q. What else?

A. It makes people suppose that only the wicked can be happy in this world.

54. Q. What is the right conception of duty?

A. That it is not "a cross," or a self-sacrifice, but harmony, beauty, and joy. We sacrifice ourselves, and make life "a cross" when we disobey the laws[1] of the body and the mind.

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[1] For a definition of law, consult last chapter.

CHAPTER II

THE CHRISTIAN REVELATION

1. Q. Which of the "Revelations" you have mentioned, has exerted the greatest influence in the world?

   A. Without doubt, the Christian.

2. Q. How?

   A. It has helped to shape the history of the first-class nations of the world.

3. Q. Has this influence been good or bad?

   A. It has been both good and bad.

4. Q. Where is the Christian Revelation to be found?

   A. In a book called the "Holy Bible" and consisting of the old and new testaments.

5. Q. Give me the most accurate information concerning the "Holy Bible."

   A. It is a collection of sixty-six books, written by different authors at different periods in different languages and in different countries of the world.

6. Q. How is it then, that we have them all in one volume?

   A. They were collected gradually into one volume by religious synods and councils.

7. Q. Which are the oldest books in the Bible?

   A. Those contained in the Old Testament—about thirty-nine in number.

8. Q. What do these books write about?

   A. The rise and progress of the Jews, their laws and manners, their wars and persecutions.

9. Q. Is it any different from the history of any other primitive people?

   A. Not materially.

10. Q. Does it give us any intellectual or moral truths at first hand?

   A. No. Truth or knowledge is a conquest, not a Revelation.

11. Q. Why, then, is the history of the Jews regarded as the "word of God"?

   A. There is absolutely no reason why the history of any ancient or modern people should be so regarded.

12. Q. How many books are there in the New Testament?

   A. Twenty-seven—four Gospels; one Acts of the Apostles; twenty-one Letters; and one dream or vision called the Revelation of John.

13. Q. Has the New Testament always contained the same number of books?

A. No. It was not until about one hundred and fifty years after the death of Jesus that a collection of writings was accepted as the new covenant — "testament" is probably a mis-translation.

14. Q. Then the "Revelation" was not taken down at the time it was given?

A. No.

15. Q. Nor by the people to whom it was given?

A. No. With the exception of the four Letters of Paul and one of James, we have absolutely no knowledge as to the authorship of the remaining books of the New Testament.

16. Q. How, then, do you explain the titles, "The Gospel, According to Matthew," "Luke," "Mark," etc.?

A. These titles represent the opinions of the editors or translators. It

is very probable that some compiler culled from a mass of notes —memorabilia — the reports about Jesus and published them under the name of an apostle to give the work greater authority. The word "according," at the head of each Gospel, lends color to this theory.

17. Q. Why did not the apostles write their own message?

A. They did not consider it worth while, as they expected the world would end in their day

18. Q. How early was the first attempt to commit to writing the sayings of Jesus?

A. About the time of the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, seventy years after the death of Jesus.

19. Q. What effect did the destruction of Jerusalem have upon the followers of Jesus?

A. It put an end to their hope of the immediate return of the Messiah.

20. Q. Are the four Gospels the only biographies of Jesus that have ever appeared?

A. No, there have been many others.[1]

21. Q. Why are they not all in the bible?

A. They are excluded as being apocryphal.[2]

22. Q. What is an apocryphal Gospel?

A. One that has not received the required number of votes, in ecclesiastical councils, to be considered inspired.

23. Q. Have these "apocryphal" gospels always been excluded from the New Testament?

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[1] The Gospel of the Infancy, Gospel of Nicodemus, of Hermas, of James the Lesser, of Thomas the Israelite; Gospel of the Nativity of Mary and the Childhood of Jesus, and the Gospels attributed to Jesus Christ, the Virgin, and the Apostles.

[2] From two Greek words meaning: "concealed, hidden away."

A. No. The "Shepherd of Hermas" and probably others were at one time included.

24. Q. In what language were the books of the bible written?

A. In Hebrew, Greek, and, possibly, also, Aramaic.

25. Q. Are the original manuscripts, from which our English bible is said to have been translated, still in existence?

A. They are not.

26. Q. How do we know, then, that the translation is accurate?

A. We have no way of knowing, as we cannot compare the translation with the original.[1]

27. Q. If the original manuscripts are lost what is it they have translated into English?

A. The supposed copies of the lost originals.

[1] Dionysius, of Corinth, in the 2d Cent. (170 A.D.), complains that the "Scriptures of the Lord are falsified."

28. Q. Do we know whether these copies are reliable?

A. No.

29. Q. When were these copies produced?

A. Possibly hundreds of years after the originals had been lost.

30. Q. How many of these "copies" are there in existence?

A. A very large number.

31. Q. Do they always agree with one another?

A. We know that they do not.

32. Q. How did the translators overcome the difficulty presented by so many contradictory readings?

A. By finally voting on the question as to which should be accepted and which rejected.

33. Q. If the original manuscripts are lost, how do you account for the words, "Translated out of the original Greek," on the title page of the New Testament.

A. The revisers have finally dropped the word "*original*" from the title page, not thinking it honest to keep it there any longer.

"One reason why so many persons are really shocked and pained by the avowal of heretical opinions is the very fact that such avowal is uncommon. It is because they live in an enervating fool's paradise of seeming assent and conformity, that the breath of an honest and out-spoken word strikes so eager and nipping on their sensibilities."—JOHN MORLEY.

CHAPTER III

THE CANON OF THE BIBLE

1. Q. What is meant by the "canon" of the bible?

   A. "Canon" is a Greek word meaning "rule" and is used to qualify the collection or catalogue of books which ecclesiastical councils have declared to be of divine authority in matters of faith and practice.

2. Q. Has the "canon" of the bible remained the same from the beginning?

   A. No. The early Christians being mostly Jews, regarded only the Old Testament as the authoritative word of God.[1]

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[1] After the Old Testament, tradition was the chief source of knowledge in the early church.

3. Q. What do the apostolic fathers[1] say on this subject?

   A. We infer from their writings that they did not regard the New Testament as of equal authority with the Old.

4. Q. When did the New Testament come to be placed on a level with the Old Testament?

   A. The schism between the Jewish and Gentile Christians gave rise to the idea of a Catholic church[2] possessing authority to decide all matters pertaining to doctrine and practice. To realize this idea it was necessary to have a

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[1] Hermas, Barnabas, Papias, Polycarp, Ignatius, Justin, and Clement, have scarcely any express citation from the New Testament. They apply the word "Scriptures" only to the Old Testament. See Davidson, "Introduction," Etc.

Hegesippus, writing in the year 180 A.D., appeals only to the "Old Testament and the Lord," as the source of all authority.

[2] "The formation of a Catholic church and of a canon was simultaneous."—Davidson.

generally accepted "word of God." The demand in time created the supply and a "canon" of the New Testament was the result.

5. Q. How early is the first reference to such a "canon"?

   A. The latter half of the second century.[1]

6. Q. What were the books contained in the earliest "canons"?

   A. The Christian fathers Justin, Tertullian, Irenaeus, Origen,[2] and many others, give each a different list.

7. Q. What was the canon of Muratori?

   A. It appeared about the year 170 A.D., and did not contain Paul's

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[1] Fisher, Christian Doctrine, p. 72.

[2] Origen speaks of three classes of Scriptures: the authentic, the unauthentic, and middle class. In the middle class he included James, Jude, 2d Peter and 3d John, which are in our bible.

Epistle to the Hebrews, nor those of Peter, 1 John and James.

8. Q. What was the canon of the Emperor Constantine?

A. It was produced in the year 352 A.D., and contained the present number of books except the Book of Revelation.

9. Q. What was the Syrian "canon"?

A. It lacked the Second Epistle of Peter, Third of John, the Epistle of Jude, and the Book of Revelation.

10. Q. What other books in the bible have been questioned?

A. The Epistles of Paul, the Epistle of James, the Book of the Acts of the Apostles; and Job,[1] Esther and others, in the Old Testament.

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[1] Luther rejected the Book of Job as being no more than "a sheer *argumentum fabulae*."

11. Q. What was Luther's bible?

A. Luther did not regard the Book of Revelation nor the Epistle of James as a part of God's word.

12. Q. What is the position of the modern creeds on the question of the "canon"?

A. Article VI., of the 39 Articles of the Church of England, reads: "In the name of Holy Scriptures we do understand those canonical books of the Old and New Testaments of whose authority was never any doubt in the church."[1] But this is both obscure and misleading, as there is scarcely a book in the New Testament, the authenticity of which has not been questioned in the church.

13. Q. Does the Catholic bible agree in all respects with the Protestant?

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[1] The position of the other Christian denominations is very much the same.

A. No, the Catholic bible contains seventy-two "inspired" books.

14. Q. How is that?

A. The Catholics accept as inspired many of those which the Protestants reject as apocryphal.

15. Q. How does the Catholic church treat those who deny inspiration to these apocryphal books?

A. The Council of Trent[1] decreed a curse against them.

16. Q. When was the Catholic bible translated?

A. It is claimed to have been translated by St. Jerome in the fourth century.

17. Q. What was this translation called?

A. The Latin Vulgate.[2]

18. Q. Has the Catholic bible been revised at all?

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[1] One of the infallible councils. See Introduction to Catholic bible, Douay version.

[2] An English version of this was made in 1609.

A. Yes, by the Popes Sixtus V. and Clement VIII.

19. Q. When was the present Protestant translation of the bible made?

A. In 1611, under King James, of England.

20. Q. Has it been revised since?

A. Yes, in 1884 a new translation was produced.

21. Q. Does it differ at all from the King James version?

A. It certainly does.

22. Q. Are the variations important?

A. Some are very important.

23. Q. What are they?

A. The verse in 1 John, V., 7: "For there are three that bear record in heaven—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one." This verse which has been quoted in defense of the doctrine of the

Trinity, does not appear in the new version.

24. Q. What else?

A. The notes which have been inserted in the margin of the new version throw doubt upon many passages hitherto accepted as of unquestionable authority.

25. Q. Give an example.

A. In the last chapter of the Gospel, according to Mark, a note in the margin reads: "The two oldest Greek Manuscripts and some other authorities omit from verse 9 to the end."[1] Another note reads: "Some other authorities have a different ending to the Gospel."

26. Q. Are these missing verses important?

A. Yes. They relate to the resurrection and ascension of Jesus, and

[1] Missing eleven verses.

above all, to the doctrine of eternal damnation.

27. Q. What may also be inferred from the marginal words "some other authorities have a different ending to the Gospel"?

A. That the translators had many manuscripts from which to select "the word of God." [1]

28. Q. Are these the only translations that have been made?

A. No. Many scholars have made independent translations, believing the authorized versions to be inaccurate.

29. Q. Do Catholics and Protestants regard the bible in the same light?

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[1] The American committee, failing to have their recommendations accepted by the English, had the same published as an Appendix to the Revision. . . . Speaking of the authorship of one of the books, Justin Martin loosely remarks: "A man among us named John wrote it." And Luke prefaces his Gospel with the significant words: "Forasmuch as *many* have taken in hand to set forth, etc., it seemed good to me to write also."—Luke 1, 1-3. Is this the infallible language of inspiration?

A. They do not.

30. Q. Explain the difference.

A. The Catholics hold that it is the church that gives to the "word of God" its authority.[1]

31. Q. What is their argument?

A. They quote St. Augustine, who confessed that "There were more things in the bible he did not understand than things he did understand." If so great a doctor of the church could not understand the "word of God" without an infallible interpreter, say the Catholics, much less can ordinary mortals.[2]

32. Q. Do Catholics permit private interpretation of the bible?

A. They do not.

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[1] "We Catholics . . . not only would not, but simply could not, believe the bible to be the inspired word of God, unless we had the authority of the church for it." —Rev. John Scully.

[2] Catholic Belief, chap. VIII. Rev. Louis S. Lambert.

33. Q. Do they permit the people to read the bible?

A. Only with approval of their Bishop.[1]

34. Q. What is the Protestant doctrine of the bible?

A. That it is the infallible "word of God," which each must read and interpret for himself.

35. Q. How can fallible man interpret the bible infallibly?

A. It is claimed that the Holy Spirit reveals the true meaning of the Scriptures to all.

36. Q. Does the Holy Spirit reveal the same meaning to all readers?

A. Evidently not, for there are many contrary interpretations.

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[1] "To guard against error, it was judged necessary to forbid the reading of Scriptures in the vulgar languages without the permission of spiritual guides."—Catholic Bible (Pref.).

37. Q. Are all the Protestants agreed on the question of baptism?[1]

A. They are not.

38. Q. Or on the question of Predestination?

A. They are not.

39. Q. Or on eternal punishment?

A. They are not.

40. Q. On the Doctrine of Atonement?

A. They are not.

41. Q. On the Divinity of Jesus?

A. They are not; though they claim to have infallible revelation on all these disputed matters.

42. Q. Had there been no infallible revelation on these questions would the churches have been more at variance concerning them?

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[1] "In what way the washing of new-born babies," insures their salvation is still a subject of discussion in the churches. See James Martineau's works.

A. It is not likely.

43. Q. What would help to reconcile the disagreeing sects?

A. A new revelation to make plain the meaning of the old.

44. Q. What is the principal objection against an inspired book?

A. It limits the possession of truth to one people or race and makes it a thing of the long past.

45. Q. What else?

A. It makes all further research and investigation unnecessary; it gives to a sect or a church, power to suppress new truth and to persecute all who help to broaden the horizon of the mind.

46. Q. What is the testimony of history in this respect?

A. (1) It is said that Omar ordered the Alexandrian Library to be reduced to ashes, because the

Koran contained all that was worth knowing.

(2) In the same spirit, the Catholic church, believing the bible sufficient for all human needs, made war upon Greek and Roman culture until not a trace of it was left in Europe for nearly one thousand years.

(3) In modern times all scientists and discoverers have been branded as infidels if not persecuted to death, for anouncing conclusions different from those of the "word of God."[1]

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[1] Martin Luther denounced the astronomers in these words:

"People gave ear to an upstart astrologer who strove to show that the earth revolves, not the heavens or the firmament. . . . The fool wishes to reverse the entire science of astronomy. But sacred history tells us that Joshua commanded the sun to stand still, not the earth."

When printing was invented it was hated by the Church as the black art, and a Governor of Virginia said: "I thank God that in those days there was not a printing press nor a school in all Virginia to breed heresy."

47. Q. What is the inference from these examples?

A. That an infallible book stands in the way of the progress of mankind.

48. Q. How is the bible regarded to-day in Europe and America?

A. Largely as the literature of primitive and uninformed peoples.

49. Q. Is it still worshiped anywhere as an infallible authority?

A. Only among the least educated people.[1]

50. Q. What is the right use of the bible?

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[1] "It may be said in benevolent apology for the teaching of Spurgeon (Moody, Dowie, and Talmadge) "that it has its taint of vulgarity; but vulgar people exist and must have their religion."—James Martineau.

But let it not be forgotten that men and women of culture, science and refinement exist, too, who have an equal right to a religion of their own.

See James Martineau's Speeches, etc., p. 433.

A. To accept whatever is helpful in it and to reject the rest.[2]

[2] When the church was all powerful no one was permitted to reject any portion of the bible. The eighteenth and nineteenth verses of the last chapter of "Revelation," threatening with awful plagues all who shall add or take away from the written Word, were quoted as sanctioning the persecution against scientists and philosophers. The writer of a heretical book had to sign the following document to escape burning at the stake: "The author has laudably made his submission and reprobated his book." (Auctor laudabiliter se subjecit et opus reprovavit.)

CHAPTER IV

GOD

1. Q. Tell me something of the popular ideas about God?

   A. The majority of people think of God as the Person who has created the heavens and the earth and all that they contain.

2. Q. What else?

   A. That he knows everything, sees everything, possesses everything —and is everywhere.

3. Q. What do they believe about his character?

   A. That he is just and holy.

4. Q. What else?

   A. That he is a God of love.

5. Q. Have they always thought of him as a God of love?

A. No. God grows better as man improves in intelligence and character.

6. Q. Explain your meaning?

A. The god of the savage was a savage and a bandit; the god of Job, the Arab chief, was an Oriental despot; the god of the Jews was a man of war and revenge; and the god of many Christians is a being who punishes the errors of this brief life with unending torments.[1]

7. Q. What other ideas are there of God?

A. That he is deeply interested in what we think, say and do.

8. Q. And why?

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[1] Though belief in eternal torments is still professed by church-goers it is difficult to find any one in our day who acts as if he really believed in so horrible a doctrine. Abraham Lincoln said, that, if this doctrine were true, no one should take the time to attend to anything else in life but remain praying on his knees from the cradle to the tomb.

A. To reward us for the things that give him pleasure and to punish us for the things which offend him.

9. Q. What name is God known by?

A. By different names in different countries. The Greeks call him Zeus; the Romans, Jove; the Persians, Ormuzd; the Hindoos, Brahm; the Jews and Christians Jehovah or Elohim; the Mohammedans, Allah.

10. Q. What other names have men given to God?

A. "The Supreme Being," the "The Infinite," "The First Cause," "The Over Soul," "The Eternal Energy," "The Universe," "Nature," "Mind," "Order," etc.

11. Q. But when people say "God," do they not all mean the same thing?

A. Not exactly, for some mean a person; others, an idea, a law; or

the unknown or unknowable power which finds expression in the phenomenal world; to others, again God is "The Whole" or the *Point of Confluence* of the forces of matter and mind.[1]

12. Q. Have people always believed in a god?

A. In some form or other the majority of people have always believed in a god or gods.

13. Q. Have there been more than one god?

A. According to popular belief, yes.

14. Q. What are people believing in more than one god, called?

A. Polytheists; while those believing in one god are called Monotheists.

15. Q. Name a few of the polytheist people in the world.

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[1] See chapter on Prayer for discussion on the personality of God.

A. The Egyptians, Hindoos, Greeks and Romans.

16. Q. Who were the Monotheists?

A. The Jews, Christians,[1] and Mohammedans.

17. Q. Have these latter always believed in one god?

A. No. Polytheism was the earliest belief of all nations.[2]

18. Q. What were the gods of the polytheists?

A. The sun, moon, invisible spirits, shadows, giants, fairy men and women, animals, trees, mountains, rocks, rivers — almost everything.

19. Q. How do you know that these objects were regarded as gods?

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[1] Would the belief of the Christians in the Trinity exclude them from this list?

[2] The claim that to the Jews the Unity of God was divinely revealed is not supported by the facts. It is clearly shown by the Old Testament accounts that the Jews believed in other gods and that their god was jealous of them.

A. Because they prayed to them, built churches or temples for them, made images and idols to represent them, and sacrificed to them.

20. Q. Did they consider all these gods of equal importance?

A. No, the intelligent few looked upon the many gods as the servants or symbols of the one god who was above all.

21. Q. And the ignorant?

A. They believed some to be stronger, more friendly, more beautiful, and wiser, than others.

22. Q. How did the belief in gods originate?

A. That question has given rise to many theories.

23. Q. Mention a few of them?

A. There is first the theory that ignorance led the earliest people, who were much like children, *to fear*

what they did not understand, and to ascribe what they *feared* to the agency of invisible beings patterned after themselves only on a very much larger scale.

Second: The theory that the feeling of human helplessness or dependence is responsible for the belief in beings more powerful than ourselves.

Third: According to another theory, man, who is a sociable being by nature, feels the necessity of entering into fellowship with the invisible forces about him, for which purpose he personifies them.

Fourth: The theory that death is the chief cause of the belief in gods.

24. Q. In what way?

A. It is said that if we could live on this earth forever, we would get along without imagining the existence of supernatural beings.

It is the knowledge that we will die which makes us think of another life and of beings who control life and death. The animals have no gods, because they have no knowledge of their mortality.

25. Q. Is the number of gods increasing?

A. It is decreasing.

26. Q. Why?

A. As people advance in knowledge and power they feel more and more able to take care of themselves.

27. Q. Have the educated people fewer gods than the ignorant?

A. Yes. The belief in many gods prevails only in the least civilized countries.

28. Q. How about the belief in one god?

A. It is still very largely held.

29. Q. Are there any people who do not believe in a god?

A. There are.

30. Q. Why do they not?

A. Because they say a being such as he is conceived to be by the popular mind, is beyond the sphere of our knowledge.

31. Q. Cannot the existence of a god be demonstrated?

A. Some think it can, and others, again, that it cannot.[1]

32. Q. State a few of the principal arguments for the existence of a god.

A. The first is the argument based on the law of causality.

33. Q. What is that?

A. Every effect or existence must have a cause. The Universe is an existence, therefore the Universe has a cause which is—God.

34. Q. Is not that a strong argument?

A. It is very strong, but not conclusive.

Consult Kant's Critique. Caro's L'Idee de Dieu dans la Critique Contemporaine. Guyau's L'Irreligion de L'Avenir. (Translated.)

35. Q. Why not?

A. If every existence must have a cause, God, who is an existence, must have a cause, too.

36. Q. But could not God have his existence from all eternity?

A. If he could exist at all without a cause, then the argument that there is no existence without a cause, falls to the ground.

37. Q. What else?

A. If God could exist from the beginning without a cause, so could the universe.

38. Q. What would follow if we admitted that God, too, had a cause?

A. Then we would wish to know what was the cause of that cause, and so on, building an eternal chain without beginning or end.[1]

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[1] Read chapter on Kant in Hist. of Philosophy, by George Henry Lewis.

39. Q. What is the next argument?

A. The argument from perfection.

40. Q. Explain that.

A. It is said that though we ourselves are imperfect beings, we still carry in our minds, as in a mirror, the idea or reflection of a perfect being.

41. Q. What is the inference?

A. That this reflection in the mirror of the mind of a perfect being, proves the existence of such a being, which is—God.[1]

42. Q. Explain further.

A. If we have in our minds the image of a perfect being, this being must also possess existence, for, if he lacked that he would not be perfect.

43. Q. What would follow?

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[1] This was Decartes' celebrated argument, which, with slight modification, was presented also by Malebranche, Leibnitz, Reid and many others.

A. It would follow that our idea of God proves that God exists, for, if such a being did not exist, we could not have thought of him as existing.

44. Q. What is the value of this argument?

A. It is not considered so strong as the first.

45. Q. Why?

A. Perfection is a *quality;* existence is a *condition,* and the argument confounds the one with the other. We may have in our minds, for instance, the image or dream of a perfect city hidden away in the bosom of the ocean or floating on the clouds, without there being any such city in existence to correspond to the picture in our mind.

46. Q. Give me another illustration.

A. For many centuries people entertained the idea that the world

was flat, yet that idea in their mind could not have been the reflection of the earth for such an earth never existed.

47. Q. Do these perfectly good or perfectly bad beings exist only in our minds?

A. Yes.

48. Q. What is the next argument?

A. It is called the argument from design.[1]

49. Q. What is that?

A. Just as a watch, the works of which are so constructed as to strike the hour, proves beyond a doubt a watch-maker, the world, by its more wonderful mechanism proves a world-maker.

50. Q. What is the value of this argument?

A. There is no similarity between a watch and a world. It is not so

[1] Paley and Bishop Butler were the great advocates of this argument.

easy to agree on what the world was made for, as it is to tell what a watch was made for.

51. Q. Are not the marks of design in nature as unmistakable as those in the watch?

A. If they were there would be no mysteries. We would then know everything.

52. Q. Do you mean to say we do not understand the world as fully as we do a watch?

A. Yes, and that we cannot, therefore, explain it as satisfactorily as we can a watch.

53. Q. What else may be said against this argument?

A. A watch could prove only a watch-maker, not also one who created the materials out of which the watch was made.

54. Q. What then?

A. Even admitting a world-maker, we

would still have to prove a world-creator.

55. Q. In view of these difficulties, what is the right attitude of mind toward this question?

A. One of earnest investigation. We should neither be dogmatic nor flippant, but continue to seek for light.

56 Q. In what sense may the word god be properly used?

A. As representing the highest ideals of the race. Whatever we believe in with all our heart, and seek to possess with all our might, is our God.

57. Q. Would it not follow from that that some people's Gods are better and nobler than others?

A. Undoubtedly; each man is the measure of his own Ideal, or God.

58. Q. Explain further.

A. As we see only as much and as far as the structure of our eyes will permit, so we can only think and desire according to the compass of our mind.

59. Q. Who, then, made God?
A. Each man makes his own God.[1]

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[1] It is proper also to speak of God as representing the constitution of the Universe, yet, even then, he, or she, or it would be to us no more, and no less, than a picture in *our mind.* A subjective God is all we can have any relations with.

CHAPTER V

THE EARTH

1. Q. How old is the earth?

   A. The years of the earth run into the millions.

2. Q. Has it always been inhabited?

   A. For a long time the earth was too hot to permit of life.[1]

3. Q. What is the origin of the world?

   A. Scientists tell us the world was once a sailing cloud of fire, the molecules or particles of which were prevented from coming together by the excessive heat.

4. Q. What happened then?

   A. In the course of long ages the heat declined, giving the atoms a chance to come together.

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[1] Virchow, on the Teachings of Science.—Clifford. Martyrdom of Man.—Winwood Reade.

5. Q. What was the result of this concentration of atoms?

A. The sun was formed—a vast ball of fire, which, as it rotated and revolved, cast off pieces which became worlds. The earth is one of them.

6. Q. How did life begin on the earth?[1]

A. As the earth, which is like a bubble in a Niagara of worlds, became cooler, it shrank and contracted and divided into land and water.

7. Q. And then?

A. With this process of cooling, the thick, smoky atmosphere which had enveloped it before, disappeared, letting the sun's rays to penetrate to the earth.

8. Q. What happened then?

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[1] Tyndall's Belfast Lectures, 1874.

Revue d'Anthropologie; Philosophie Zoologique.—Lamark.

The Origin of Species.—Chas. Darwin, 1859,

The Physical Basis of Life.—Huxley.

A. "The earth became with young."[1]

9. Q. In what form did life first appear?

A. In the form of *specks*, which floated on the surface of the waters, and repeated themselves.

10. Q. What are these specks called?

A. In scientific language they are called embryonic plants.

11. Q. What was the next form of life?

A. Then appeared other specks which lived on the first. These were more complex in organism and are called embryonic animals.

12. Q. Were these animated specks the ancestors of man?

A. The history of our race begins with them.

13. Q. Are you sure you have given me the true story of the earth?

A. No. This is only an hypothesis or a guess.

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[1] Winwood Reade.

14. Q. Has it any value whatever?

A. It has great value, because it is not a random guess, but the result of the patient labors of the greatest scientists of the world.

15. Q. What is this hypothesis called?

A. The theory of evolution.

16. Q. Are there any other theories on the subject?

A. There is also the theory of creation.

17. Q. Which is the oldest?

A. The creation story.

18. Q. What is that?

A. According to this theory, the heavens and the earth and all that they contain were created in the space of six days by the "word of God."

19. Q. Was anybody present when God created the heavens and the earth?

A. There could not have been.

20. Q. On whose authority then, is the statement based?

A. On the authority of men who were not eye-witnesses.

21. Q. Why is their word accepted?

A. It is claimed that God told them how he made the world.

22. Q. How do we know that?

A. The men themselves say so.

23. Q. Are we expected to accept their word upon their own authority?

A. It is the only proof they offer.

24. Q. The theory of creation, then, is a guess, too?

A. It is.

25. Q. Of the two, which should we prefer?

A. The one which commends itself to the most enlightened minds and best explains the known facts.

26. Q. In accepting either theory do we thereby bind ourselves to it forever?

A. No! We reserve to ourselves the liberty of exchanging it for a better one whenever we can do so.

27. Q. Who is the author of the Theory of Evolution?

A. Charles Darwin is the man with whose name more than with that of any other the doctrine of evolution is associated.

28. Q. Who is the author of the story of creation?

A. Moses is perhaps the most frequently quoted authority on the subject.

29. Q. Compare the two men.

A. Darwin was a student and a scientist who spent all his life interrogating Nature; Moses was not a scientist, he made no independent investigations but accepted the views about the origin of the earth which were current in that remote age.

30. Q. How do people distinguish between the ideas of Darwin and those of Moses?

A. The ideas of Darwin are called Science; those of Moses Theology.[1]

31. Q. What is the standing of Moses with modern scientists?

A. As a scientist he has no standing at all.

32. Q. Is it proper to point out the mistakes of a man considered infallible?

A. If he makes mistakes, yes.

33. Q. Has any violence ever been used to advance Darwin's views?

A. No.

34. Q. To advance those of Moses?

A. Yes,—men have been put to death by fire and the sword.

35. Q. Whose views prevail to-day?

[1] Even Moses, in trying to explain the world was obeying a scientific impulse—the story of the creation was the best solution he could invent. But the science of Moses has become the theology of the churches.

A. Darwin's.

36. Q. What does that signify?

A. That error cannot be maintained by force; and that no miracle in the calendars or bibles of the world can compare with the triumph of truth.[1]

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[1] Mohammedanism is to-day the religion of nearly two hundred millions of people; but let us think of the blood-shed and of the long ages of persecution and the large sums of money which were required to perpetuate Islam. The same may be said of Christianity: it has cost two thousand years of war, persecution, inquisition and oceans of human lives and of money.

But let us turn our eyes upon this other picture: A short time ago some scientists, foremost among whom was Charles Darwin, announced a new doctrine—the doctrine of evolution, which was as new, as radical, as revolutionary, as either Mohammedanism or Christianity, and yet it has overcome the most determined and fanatical opposition, and is, at the present day, accepted and taught in all the world. Yet, to achieve this stupendous triumph, it has required only about a half century of time and absolutely without the remotest suggestion of persecution—without so much as singeing the hair of a single human being. Could anything be a greater compliment to the puissance of truth? In the course of a few years science has established a grander empire than the bibles of the world in spite of the bloody seas they have sailed through for the past thousands of years.

CHAPTER VI

MAN

1. Q. What is man?[1]
   A. A rational animal.
2. Q. How old is man?
   A. Hundreds of thousands of years old.
3. Q. Who were his ancestors?
   A. The mammalia.[2]
4. Q. How do you know?
   A. In the composition, structure and function of his organs man is exactly like an animal.
5. Q. Specify a few of the points of re-

[1] Consult Natural Hist. of Man.—Pichard.
Man's Place in Nature.—Prof. Huxley.
Descent of man.—Chas. Darwin.
Unité de L'Espécs Humaine—de Quatrefages, Paris, 1861.
Early Hist. of Man—Tylor.
Antiquity of Man.—Lubbock.

[2] The highest class of vertebrata—all the animals which nurse their own young only.

semblance between man and the animals?

A. Man has not a muscle or a bone or an organ which is not paralleled in the animals.

6. Q. What else?

A. They are both composed of the same materials, possess the same physical parts and are subject to the same laws of life and death.

7. Q. Does man differ at all from the animals?

A. Intellectually and morally, man is superior to all the animals.

8. Q. In what other way do they differ?

A. The animal seeks only the gratification of his appetites; man, the realization of his ideals.

9. Q. What else?

A. Man lives and labors for the future, for posterity—for his fellows not yet born; the animals exhibit no sense of the beyond.

10. Q. In what relation does man stand to the animal?

A. He is descended or ascended from the animal.[1]

11. Q. What is the strongest proof that man has ascended from the animal?

A. The fact that the human embryo before birth passes through stages of development when he has gills like a fish, a tail, great toes, a body covered with hair, and a brain like that of a monkey.

12. Q. What is the meaning of this?

A. That man in his long existence, has climbed through all these forms of life to his present state.

13. Q. Do you mean to say that there was a time when man was an

[1] "The abyss which, through the ignorance of man, was placed between him and the brute world does not exist."—Dr. G. L. Duprat, Professor in University, Lyons, France.

animal like some of those known to us to-day?

A. For many, many years, he was like the monkey, the gorilla, the chimpanzee, or the orang-outang.

14. Q. How long ago was that?

A. It is difficult to say, but probably hundreds of thousands of years ago.

15. Q. Man was not specially created then?

A. No. He grew slowly upwards—from lower forms of life.

16. Q. Have there ever been any eye-witnesses of an animal evolving into a man?

A. No. Nature works in secret. The lower animals have passed into man by soft, slow, imperceptible gradations—as one view dissolves into another.

17. Q. Is this growth or development confined to his body?

A. His mind or reason is just as much an evolution as his body.

18. Q. Why do not all animals develop into men?

A. For the same reason that all savages have not developed into civilized peoples.

19. Q. What is that?

A. Unfavorable conditions.

20. Q. Explain this.

A. Progress results from necessity. Both animals and savages remain stationary as long as they can preserve themselves in comfort. They invent and develop new resources only when compelled or threatened by danger and death.

21. Q. Explain further.

A. Men and animals are the expression of the conditions under which they live. When these change, men and animals change with them.

22. Q. What one thing has contributed to the development of man more than anything else?

A. The struggle for existence.

23. Q. Are there any other opinions on the genesis of man?

A. Yes. A great many people still believe that he was created by God, all at once and perfect, some six thousand years ago.[1]

24. Q. What is meant by "created perfect"?

A. Made in the likeness of God.

25. Q. Is it claimed that man was once as perfect as God?

A. I do not think so.

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[1] The American Association for the Advancement of Science, by almost unanimous vote, "declared Adam and Eve to be myths."—Comp. Report of Asso., 1901, Aug. 29.

Notwithstanding the unanimity of men of science on this point, the world over, the clergy still continue the tra-la-la of empty phrases about the first man, etc. But can the clergy afford to ignore the doings and sayings of the men of science?

26. Q. Then he was imperfect, compared with God?

A. Yes.

27. Q. Why do they say, then, that man was created perfect?

A. I believe they mean he was as perfect as a man could ever hope to be.

28. Q. Why is he not perfect now?

A. It is said that he fell from perfection by an act of disobedience against his creator.

29. Q. How could a perfect man commit a crime?

A. It is said that the creator for his own glory permitted the crime.

30. Q. Then he obeyed God instead of disobeying him?

A. Yes, if he was helping to carry out the eternal purpose of God.

31. Q. What were the consequences of man's fall?

A. Sin, suffering and death, for all mankind.

32. Q. Was there no evil in the world before the fall of man?

A. There was, according to science; and also according to the bible, for it says Satan tempted Adam.[1]

33. Q. What is the popular belief about Satan?

A. That he is the great enemy of God and man.

34. Q. What else?

A. That he is as powerful for evil as God is for good.

35. Q. How old is the devil?

A. Almost as old as God—in the popular mind.

36. Q. How may the belief in a devil be explained?

A. Mankind, in its childhood, in attempting to account for the existence of light and darkness, life and death, love and hate,

[1] As both Satan and hell existed before Adam man cannot be held responsible for the introduction of evil into the Universe.

accepted the simplest solution—that of supposing two different Beings, the one good and the other bad,—ruling the world.

37. Q. Is he also as wise as God?

A. No, but he is believed to be very cunning.

38. Q. What is said to be the object of his existence?

A. To tempt and ruin men and to spoil the work of God.

39. Q. Who is responsible for his existence?

A. The common belief is that he was, like the first man, a perfect being—an archangel, who, desiring to be a god himself, was put out of heaven.

40. Q. Why does not God destroy the devil?

A. For the same reason that is said to have influenced him in permitting the fall of man.

41. Q. What is that?

A. His own glory.

42. Q. Will there always be a devil and a hell?

A. According to many people—yes.

43. Q. Why do people believe in such stories about the devil, etc.?

A. Because their fathers and mothers believed in them.

44. Q. What do you think of such beliefs?

A. The opinions and beliefs of people concerning subjects they have not diligently studied are of little value.

45. Q. What are the effects of a belief in the devil?

A. It makes men superstitious, melancholy, cowardly and cruel.

46. Q. How may the belief in a devil be outgrown?

A. Through enlightenment.

47. Q. What is the most fearful thing in the world?

A. Fear.

48. Q. Why?

A. Because by paralyzing both mind and body fear deprives us of the ability to defend ourselves and when we cannot defend ourselves we become the sport of political and religious scarecrows.

"Wide horizons tend to enlarge the mind; limited horizons, on the contrary, circumscribe it. Stagnant water is not inclined to flow; the wind, instead of rousing it to life, simply irritates it. It is the hatred of narrow minds for liberal ideas that fetters the march of progress."—VICTOR HUGO, '93.

CHAPTER VII

JESUS

1. Q. What is the prevailing belief about Jesus?

   A. That he was a god and the son of a god.

2. Q. What else?

   A. That he was also a man like ourselves.

3. Q. Was he both god and man?

   A. That is the popular belief.

4. Q. What are the evidences of his divinity?

   A. It is said that he was conceived of the Holy Ghost; that he was without sin; that he worked miracles, and that he proclaimed himself the equal of God.

5. Q. What is the value of these claims?

A. They cannot be accepted as evidence.

6. Q. Why not?

A. In regard to the Immaculate Conception we may say that of Jesus, as a "*miracle*," we can have no opinion whatever.

7. Q. But could people be prevented from believing in his miraculous birth?

A. No; because people generally believe without any regard to the evidence.

8. Q. What is such belief called?

A. Credulity.

9. Q. How do the educated people differ from the vulgar in this respect?

A. The educated proportion their beliefs to the evidence.

10. Q. What about the miracles of Jesus?

A. As we have not ourselves seen any of his miracles they cannot have the same weight with us as with

those who were supposedly eye-witnesses.

11. Q. Continue the argument.

A. And as but a few of those who saw the miracles considered them conclusive—for many hesitated and asked for more signs —we, who have not seen them at all, would be justified in treating the miraculous element in the life of Jesus as we treat the same in those of Buddha, Moses and Mohammed.

12. Q. Explain further.

A. Without entering into the discussion of miracles in general, it could be said that, inasmuch as they are an appeal to the senses of those who may have been present, it has to be shown in the first place, that their senses did not deceive them, and in the second place, that their testimony is infallible, before we can accept them as evidence.

13. Q. We have then, only the word of man that Jesus worked miracles?

A. That is all.

14. Q. If a man, claiming to be a god, should raise the dead in *our* presence, would not that prove his claim?

A. It certainly would not.

15. Q. Why?

A. Because even if he should create also a new world in our presence, he would only be doing a few things which we could not do ourselves. Because a man can raise the dead, etc., it does not follow that he can do everything.

16. Q. What would he have to do to prove he was a god?

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[1] See Chap. I., Reason and Revelation. A safe rule in these matters is always to prefer the least wonderful to the most wonderful—it is more probable that the men who reported the miracles of Jesus were mistaken, as those who reported the miracles of Mohammed are supposed to have been—than that the dead, for instance, rose from the grave.

A. *Everything!* But in the nature of things no man can give proof that he can do everything.

17. Q. And therefore?

A. No man can prove himself a god.

18. Q. What is the strongest argument against miracles as an evidence of divinity?

A. The fact that miracles were also performed by the devil and his agents.[1]

19. Q. Did Jesus admit the power of others besides himself to work miracles?

A. Yes, when he said: "If I cast out devils by Beelzebub by whom *do your sons cast them out?*

20. Q. Has there ever been a religion that has not claimed power to work miracles?

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[1] Supernatural powers are attributed to the devil and his angels in all the religious scriptures of the world; the magicians of Egypt competed with Moses, and Simon Magus with the apostles in performing miracles.

A. We do not know of any.

21. Q. What about the claim that Jesus was without sin?

A. "And the child grew and waxed strong in spirit," says the evangelist. If Jesus grew better as he grew older, he could not have been perfect from his birth.[1]

22. Q. Tell me now about the man Jesus —when was he born, and where?

A. He was born in Palestine about two thousand years ago.

23. Q. Do the writers of the time speak about Jesus and his works?

A. There is positively no important mention of Jesus in any writing outside of the New Testament.[2]

24. Q. What is the meaning of that?

A. That either he was not considered a sufficiently important person-

[1] See Chap. VIII., Teachings of Jesus.

[2] Seneca, Ovid, Epictitus, Josephus, Philo, Pliny, Tacitus, Juvenal and Quintilian lived about the time of Jesus and his apostles.

age to write about, or that he was not known to these writers at all.

25. Q. What is the story about him in the New Testament?

A. That he did many good and wonderful deeds; that he was arrested and tried for calling himself "King of the Jews" and "Son of God"; that he was condemned and crucified; and that he rose again from the dead.

26. Q. What else?

A. That he showed himself after his resurrection to his disciples, and ascended on the clouds to heaven.

27. Q. How long did Jesus live on earth?

A. From thirty-three to fifty years, according to tradition and the gospels.[1]

28. Q. Was his public career long?

[1] There was a tradition in the early church that Jesus lived to be nearly fifty years old.

A. No. His public life covered probably a little over a year, though the Apostle John seems to make it three and a half.

29. Q. Did Jesus have a family?

A. He was not married.

30. Q. Did he have brothers and sisters?

A. Yes, he was one of a large family of children.

31. Q. Did all the members of his family believe in him?

A. Not all of them.

32. Q. Have there been others before or since Jesus who claimed to be divine, and to have worked miracles?

A. There have been many.[1]

[1] Hundreds of years before Jesus was born, Gautama, the Buddha, was worshiped as the Sinless One. He was supposed to be born without a father and to have worked miracles. The same was said of Serafis, Appollonias and many others.

The Chinese believe that Lao-Tze, the founder of one of the religions of that empire, was born at the age of eighty-four, with gray hair; his gestation was prolonged that he might have wisdom from his birth.

33. Q. Have these, too, their followers?

A. Yes, and their temples and altars, to this day.

34. Q. Were they all imposters?

A. Not at all. Most of them believed they were divinely chosen to teach or to rule the people.

35. Q. Does their sincerity make true all they taught?

A. No. Sincerity cannot change the chaff into wheat.

36. Q. What is the proper attitude toward these ancient teachers?

A. One of gratitude for their services and of honest criticism of their errors.

"If I held all the ideas of the world in my hand, in no case would I long keep it closed. I am not adapted to be a jailer of thoughts. By Heaven! I would set them free, even if they should break into our hospitals and chase the sick old world from its bed!"—HEINRICH HEINE.

CHAPTER VIII

THE TEACHINGS OF JESUS

1. Q. What were the ideas of Jesus?

   A. Mostly those of the people of his time and country.

2. Q. Of what nationality was Jesus?

   A. He was a Jew.

3. Q. What was the political condition of the Jews at that time?

   A. They were a subject race, having been conquered by the Romans.

4. Q. Was that the first time the Jews had lost their freedom?

   A. No. It may be said that they had spent the greater part of their existence in slavery and oppression, first in Egypt, then in Assyria, and finally under the Persians and Romans.

5. Q. What was their intellectual standing?

   A. Owing to this long period of political oppression under which the Jews lived, the arts, industries, sciences, literature and philosophy were necessarily neglected.

6. Q. What were the Jews distinguished for?

   A. For their religion.

7. Q. What was the great hope held out by this religion?

   A. The hope of a Messiah—a Christ[1] who would deliver the Jews from foreign bondage.

8. Q. What did Jesus teach in regard to this national hope?

   A. He offered himself as the Messiah of the Jews

9. Q. Did he deliver the Jews from their foreign yoke?

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[1] The word Christ is derived from "Kristus," a Greek word, meaning anointed.

A. No. The Jews are still without a state or kingdom of their own, and continue to be oppressed in many lands.

10. Q. Do they still look forward to "a Christ"?

A. Most of them do, but the educated among them have abandoned the hope of a Messiah, and have wisely adopted the countries in which they live as their own.

11. Q. What other political ideas did Jesus have?

A. He believed that all the kingdoms of the earth belonged to the devil but that some day he would himself be recognized as the king of kings.[1]

12. Q. What was his attitude toward Caesar?

A. He recognized his authority and commanded others to do the same.

[1] See Temptation of Jesus in the Wilderness.

13. Q. Did Jesus denounce war?

A. No; at least not directly.

14. Q. Or slavery?

A. He kept silent on that question.

15. Q. Did slavery exist in his day?

A. Slavery of the worst kind existed almost everywhere at the time.

16. Q. What did he say in regard to peace and good will?

A. That he did not come "to bring peace, but a sword."

17. Q. What else?

A. To his disciples, he said: "My peace I give unto you."

18. Q. Have all who called themselves Christians lived in peace with one another?

A. No. They have repeatedly waged war against one another, and have persecuted one another.

19. Q. Which have been the worst persecutors in the world?

A. Without doubt, those who have called themselves Christians.

20. Q. Could the teachings of Jesus be held responsible for it?

A. Only a part of it.

21. Q. For example?

A. When he said that they who did not believe on him were the children of the devil and would be damned.[1]

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[1] The following are a few of the sayings of Jesus on this subject:

"But those, mine enemies which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me."—Luke 19-27.

"And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words . . . it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for them."—Matt. 10-14.

"And he that believeth not shall be damned."—Mark 16-10.

"Depart from me ye cursed, into everlasting fire."—Matt. 25-41.

"He that will not hear the church, let him be to thee as a heathen."—Matt. 18-17.

Read also what Jesus is reported to have said about throwing into the fire the "branch" that abideth not in him; about those who refuse to confess him before men; also, his words, "Many are called, but few are chosen," etc.

22. Q. Did Jesus wish to compel people to believe on him?

A. No, but if they did not, they would be punished severely.

23. Q. What did his followers do?

A. To save people from this awful punishment, they persecuted or compelled them to become Christians.

24. Q. Define persecution.

A. It is an attempt to maintain an opinion by violence.

25. Q. Explain further.

A. It is a conspiracy to conquer the reason without enlightening it.[1]

26. Q. Has persecution ever helped the truth?

A. Never. It has only caused much

[1] "The mouth from which such heresies proceed should be stopped with blows from a bludgeon, and not with arguments."—From a letter to Pope Innocent II. by St. Bernard, Comp. Abelard, by de Reimusat and Jules Simon.

See also Chapter on Creeds.

suffering, and tempted people to commit perjury from fear.

27. Q. What is the lesson we should learn from this?

A. That freedom and fraternity are better than hate and persecution.[1]

28. Q. Did Jesus believe in the liberty of conscience?

A. No religious teacher claiming divine authority ever has.

29. Q. What other subjects did Jesus talk about?

A. About love, faith, charity, brotherhood, goodness, justice and forgiveness.

30. Q. How are his teachings on these subjects regarded?

A. Very highly.

31. Q. What were some of the most beautiful sayings of Jesus?

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[1] See Conclusion of Chapter on the Earth.

A. His parable of the Good Samaritan; the Prodigal Child; the shepherd's care for the lost sheep; the wise and foolish virgins; the sower who went out to sow his seed; the widow and her mite; and his gracious invitation to the weary and heavy laden to come unto him for rest.

32. Q. What is the value of these sayings of Jesus?

A. They are as sweet as any human words can be.

33. Q. Did Jesus ever say or do anything which it would be wrong for us to imitate?

A. Yes. In moments of anger and impatience he "cursed" and called his enemies evil names.[1]

[1] Luther defended his vehemence often by quoting the example of Jesus: "What think ye of Christ . . . when he calls the Jews an adulterous and perverse generation, a progeny of vipers, hypocrites and the children of the devil? What think ye of Paul who calls his enemies of the gospel dogs and seducers?"—Luther's Table Talk.

He used physical force[1] against the money changers; disregarded the laws of health and cleanliness; destroyed the property of his neighbors—

34. Q. Give me particulars.

A. In those days in the Orient people ate with their hands, as no knives or forks were used, and when Jesus was asked why his disciples did not wash their hands before eating he defended the unclean habit by saying that nothing which went in from the outside could hurt anybody.[2] This is also the doctrine of the Dervishes, who never wash.

35. Q. Is it true that nothing going in from the outside can hurt us?

A. No. Disease germs, foul gases,

[1] See the story of his using a whip against the money changers.

[2] No doubt the monks and anchorites of the middle ages who cultivated "dirt" as a virtue remembered this reputed saying of Jesus.

poisonous foods or drugs, intoxicating liquors, etc., frequently hurt both mind and body.

36. Q. When did Jesus destroy property belonging to his neighbors?

A. When he caused to be drowned a herd of two thousand swine without first securing from their owner the right to do so.[1]

37. Q. Would anyone be permitted to do to-day what Jesus did on that occasion?

A. Our laws punish such acts.

38. Q. But if Jesus was God, could he not have done as he pleased?

A. If that be the defense, then it were foolish for us to have any opinion whatever of him. If Jesus could do as he pleased without regard to right or wrong, as we understand them, then we would have no standard by which to judge, even that he was good.

[1] Matt. viii. 28-34.

We cannot respect or love anybody who is merely an enigma.

39. Q. Would it be fair to infer from the above instances that Jesus was severe and unjust?

A. No. There are many passages which describe him as the gentlest, kindest and friendliest of men — one who "went about doing good."

40. Q. Is not that a contradiction?

A. Not unless we regard him as a God, for there is in all men a better and a lower nature. The best of men are not always at their best; neither was Jesus.

41. Q. Is it well to disclose both sides of a man's character?

A. It is necessary to do so. We cannot understand human nature unless we understand also the contradictions of human nature.

42. Q. What did Jesus teach about marriage?

A. He preferred celibacy[1] and commended the example of those who became eunuchs[2] for the kingdom of heaven's sake.[3]

43. Q. What did Jesus teach about the future or the "kingdom of heaven"?

A. He taught that the other world was more important than this, and instead of endeavoring to right wrong conditions here and now, he counseled non-resistance to evil.[4]

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[1] How the church has interpreted Jesus' teaching on this subject may be seen from the following, "If any one shall say that the married state is to be preferred to the state of virginity or celibacy, let him be accursed. . . "—Canon of the Council of Trent.

[2] In one of the apocryphal gospels a woman asks Jesus how long this sinful word will last. To which Jesus answers: as long as you women marry and bear children.

[3] It is curious how the Catholics who believe in celibacy of the priesthood make St. Peter—a married man—their favorite apostle, while the Protestants who believe in marriage, show a decided preference for St. Paul, the celibate.

[4] "Him that taketh away thy cloak forbid not to take thy coat also. Give to every man that asketh of thee,

44. Q. What did he say to those who wept and suffered, and were persecuted and robbed of their liberties and rights?

A. To rejoice and be exceeding glad for they would have their reward in the other world.[1]

45. Q. What effect would such teaching have?

A. While it might help some people to bear the ills of life, it would unnerve the many for all efforts to right their present wrongs.

46. Q. What other effect would it have?

A. It would encourage the rich and the powerful to answer the cry for justice of the oppressed by

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and from him that taketh away thy goods, ask them not again."—Luke vi. 29, 30.

"Resist not evil; unto him that smiteth thee on the one cheek, offer also the other."—Luke vi. 29.

[1] Matt. v. 12.: Also, "Blessed be ye poor, and ye that weep now, and mourn, for great is your reward in heaven."—Matt. v. 3, 4. and Luke vi. 20, 23.

"But woe unto you that are rich, for ye have received your reward."—Luke vi. 24, 25.

suggesting to them that they ought to be satisfied with the reward promised them in the next world.

47. Q. Would the poor have any right to complain of their condition now if they are to be rewarded for it in the future?

A. No; for they could be assured that justice would be done to them in the next world, and that, since their oppressors would be punished *there*, they should be left unmolested here.[1]

48. Q. Is it right to be contented with poverty and oppression?

A. It would be treason against our fellows to encourage these evils by submitting to them.

49. Q. Is it blessed to be poor, weak and wretched?

A. It is miserable.

[1] Comp. parable of the wheat and the tares growing together until the day of the harvest.

50. Q. What should we do, then?

A. Do everything to better our condition, now, and here.

51. Q. Sum up the views of Jesus on the question of justice?

A. Those who have their reward now, like Dives, for instance, will open their eyes in hell; while those who, like Lazarus, suffer here, will go to Abraham's bosom.[1]

52. Q. Did not Jesus denounce the evil doers?

A. Yes, he spoke in tones of righteous indignation against all who, knowing the good, preferred the evil.

53. Q. On the whole, then, has the influence of Jesus been good or bad?

A. His words of love and goodness have made the centuries fragrant, but his theological doctrines have caused much hatred and bloodshed.

[1] Luke xvi. 19.

"I can conceive the existence of a church, in which, week by week, services should be devoted, not to the iteration of abstract propositions in theology, but to the setting before men's minds of an ideal of true, just and pure living; a place in which those who are weary of the burden of daily cares should find a moment's rest in the contemplation of the higher life which is possible for all, though attained by so few; a place in which the man of strife and of business should have time to think how small, after all, are the rewards he covets compared with peace and charity.

"Depend upon it, if such a church existed, no one would seek to disestablish it."—HUXLEY.

CHAPTER IX

THE CHURCH

1. Q. Define the word church.

   A. It is derived from the Greek "Kuriakon," which means the house of the Lord.

2. Q. Define the idea.

   A. At first the church was a republic of fellow-believers—an organization in the Spirit; then arose gradually a distinction between clergymen and laymen. Teaching in the church was monopolized by the priest and the bishop, who also claimed the power to save and to damn the soul forever. From a republic the church became a corporation.

3. Q. Which are the oldest churches?

   A. The Catholic, Greek, Armenian and Nestorian; and the modern churches are: the Lutheran, Episcopalian, Presbyterian, Baptist, Methodist, etc.

4. Q. What other churches are there?

   A. The Liberal, namely: Unitarian, Universalist and Unsectarian.

5. Q. Do they fellowship with one another?

   A. More now than formerly. The progress of the sciences has stopped all sectarian persecutions which once dishonored humanity.

6. Q. Do they ever co-operate in the field of charity and reform?

   A. More in this country than in any other, which is a very hopeful sign, for it shows that the spirit of toleration is spreading.

7. Q. What has contributed to this broadening process?

   A. Education and commerce; also the labors and examples of brave men and women.

8. Q. Which is the most formidable Christian church to-day?

   A. The Catholic.

9. Q. How did the Catholic Church arise?

   A. It was organized about the time the Roman Empire became converted to Christianity. The Emperor Constantine[1] was the first imperial head and protector of the Catholic Church.

10. Q. What kind of a man was he?

    A. He was both cruel and weak. Among many other crimes he murdered his wife and son; notwithstanding he presided in his

[1] Comp. Jules Simon, "La Liberte de Conscience." —P. 32-35.

imperial robes at the important councils of the church.[1]

11. Q. What effect did his imperial patronage have upon the early church?

A. It made the church covetous of wealth and influence, and the clergy ambitious, intriguing, partisan and intolerant.

12. Q. What else?

A. It made the prelates, pontiffs and popes claim authority over all things, both temporal and spiritual.

13. Q. Did the Catholic church prosper?

A. It became in time more powerful than the Roman Empire.

14. Q. What use did the church make of this vast power?

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[1] Constantine, in his silken robe embroidered with threads of gold, presided at the Council of Nice, called to take action against the Aryan heresy. At the Council of Chalcedon the priests presented the following address to the emperor: "You have established the Faith, exterminated the heretics. That the king of heaven may preserve the king of the earth is the prayer of the church and the clergy," etc.

A. It added to its pecuniary and political resources, dominated the consciences of people, put to death all the heretics, and announced that no one could have God for a father unless he accepted also the church for a mother.[1]

15. Q. What is the verdict of history on the persecutions of the Catholic church?

A. That it has caused more unnecessary suffering in the world than any other institution.[2]

16. Q. Is the Catholic church sorry today for her past?

A. The Catholic church believes it can never do wrong, therefore it has no regrets.[3]

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[1] Consult Martyrdom of Man.—Winwood Reade.

[2] See History of European Morals.—Lecky.

[3] Consult Jules Simon on the Massacre St. Bartholomew, Liberté de Conscience, pp. 43-84. In his Histoire de France Henry Martin quotes those terrible words of the Catholic priest in reply to the complaint of the soldiers that they could not tell the Catholics from the

17. Q. Why does she not persecute to-day?

A. The State will not permit it.

18. Q. Has the influence of the Catholic church been only bad?

A. No, she has also served humanity in many ways—by protecting the poor, by encouraging art, and by

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heretics: "Kill, kill all," answered the priest, "God will know his own." (Tuez, tuez, Dieu reconnaitra les siens.)

The joy of Catholic Europe over the massacre of St. Bartholomew was so great that the French Parliament ordered an annual procession in Paris to commemorate the event. Fortunately, the decree was never carried out. In Rome, however, Gregory the XIII. organized a procession which went about the streets chanting and praising God for the massacre of the heretics. This same pope also ordered a fresco representing the scenes of murder of the night of St. Bartholomew which may be seen to this day in the Sistine Chapel. In a sermon preached before this pope only a few days after the massacre, Muret, the priest, said: "O memorable night! Most glorious of all the festivals of the church. In that night even the stars shone more brilliantly, etc." The address concludes by calling Charles the IX., Catharine his queen, and the pope the most blessed in all the world, for being instrumental in bringing about the massacre of the Huguenots.—Les Predicateurs de la Ligue Labitte!

bringing about a European coalition against Asiatic invaders.

19. Q. How did the Catholic church lose its prestige?

A. In the sixteenth century a German monk rebelled and succeeded in splitting up the church. This was Martin Luther,[1] the author of the religious movement known as the Reformation.

20. Q. Do all the Protestant churches date from the Reformation?

A. Except the Church of England.

21. Q. Who was the founder of that?

A. Henry VIII., of England, who quarreled with the Pope.

22. Q. What was the occasion of the quarrel?

A. The king wished to put away his

[1] On his deathbed, Martin Luther was able to say that he had conquered three popes, one king and one emperor.

wife for another woman but the Pope would not consent to it.[1]

23. Q. What did the king do then?

A. He founded a new church of which he became the absolute Master and which let him do as he pleased.[2]

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[1] There were other points of dispute, but the desire of the king to put away Queen Catherine for a younger woman precipitated the breach between England and Rome. For a long time after, the Church of England remained, except in name, Roman Catholic in belief and practice. Consult Mosheim's Ecclesiastical Hist.

It is said that Charles V. being related to the English queen used his influence to prevent the pope from granting a divorce. Henry married six times, sent three of his wives to the block and also beheaded Sir Thomas Moore for refusing to acknowledge him as the supreme head of the church. Leo X. had called Henry VIII. "The Defender of the Faith," for having written against Luther.

[2] Henry VIII. altered the coronation oath to read: "The King shall then swear that he shall maintain and keep the lawful rights and liberties of old time granted by the righteous Christian Kings of England to the Holy Church of England, *not prejudicial to his jurisdiction and dignity royal*."

Here we have the first clear pronunciamento of the supremacy of the Secular over the Spiritual state. The Westminster divines who formulated one of the most

24. Q. What is the name of the Church of America?

A. America has no state or national church.

25. Q. Are all churches tolerated here?

A. Yes, and all religions; but while the State in America makes no appropriation for the church, in exempting church property from taxation it indirectly compels the people to support the churches.

26. Q. Is the church to-day on an equal footing with the State in any country?

A. No. The church which once ruled both kings and peoples, is now the servant of the State everywhere.

27. Q. What does that imply?

A. That a church which obeys the secular power instead of com-

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autocratic creeds, presented the same to Parliament as "their humble advice."

manding it, cannot be a divine institution.[1]

28. Q. Is there any recognition of christianity in the American Constitution?

A. No. The word "God" or "Christian" is not mentioned in the American Constitution.[2]

29. Q. Have the Protestants ever persecuted in the name of religion?

A. Almost as much as the Catholics, but the Protestants are ashamed of their past persecutions.[3]

30. Q. Were the persecutors, whether Catholic or Protestant, always bad men?

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[1] Formerly the church met this objection with the plea that the King was the "anointed terrestrial Governor under Christ, and that obedience to him was obedience to God. But the force of this argument has passed away with the "divine right" of kings. The modern State exercises its authority as coming from Man—not as coming from God.

[2] George Washington, in his message to the Senate, in 1776, stated that the American government was "in no sense founded on the Christian religion."

[3] Schaff—Creeds of Christendom.

A. No. It was frequently their sincerity which led them to persecute. Believing sincerely that heresy would cause the damnation of souls, they used both fire and the sword to exterminate it.[1]

31. Q. Why is not heresy denounced today as vehemently as before?

A. Because we have learned that honest doubt is more religious than blind belief.[2]

32. Q. Can a man who does not know how to doubt, know how to believe?

A. Not intelligently.

33. Q. What do we call the faith that is unintelligent?

A. Superstition.

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[1] It has also been suggested that the heretic was burned at the stake, because it was easier to silence him by fire than by arguments. The Church in those days claimed the right to kill all whom it could not convert. Consult Story of the Crusades, the Inquisition, etc.

[2] "There lives more faith in honest doubt,
Believe me, than in half the creeds."
—Tennyson.

34. Q. Analyze and define superstition?

A. To attribute to an object virtues or powers which it does not possess, is a superstition.

35. Q. Give an example.

A. To carry on one's person a chain, an image, or a crucifix, believing it to possess beneficent powers or virtues, would be a supersition.

36. Q. What is an object called when invested with imaginary virtues?

A. A fetish.

CHAPTER X

THE LIBERAL CHURCH

1. Q. How do the liberal churches differ from the orthodox?

   A. The Unitarian, Universalist and other liberal churches submit in a measure the doctrines of religion to the test of reason.

2. Q. Do not the orthodox do the same?

   A. Not to the same extent, for they believe that revelation is a higher authority than reason.

3. Q. What are the beliefs of the liberal churches?

   A. It is very difficult to tell, for the liberal churches follow neither revelation nor reason exclusively, but try to do a little of both.

4. Q. Cannot revelation be reconciled with reason?

   A. When revelation agrees with reason, there is only reason. It is when it disagrees with reason that there is also a revelation.

5. Q. Illustrate your meaning.

   A. When revelation teaches that man is mortal, it is only repeating what we know, but when it teaches that man was created perfect, it teaches what is contrary to our reason or experience and becomes then a revelation.

6. Q. What are some of the orthodox doctrines which liberal churches reject?

   A. The atonement; eternal punishment; plenary inspiration of the bible; a personal devil; total depravity, etc.

7. Q. Mention a few of the orthodox doctrines which the liberals accept?

A. A personal God; the sinlessness of Jesus; immortality of the soul; the duty of prayer; the superiority of the bible to any other literature and the rites of baptism and communion. Some liberal churches are more rationalistic than others.

8. Q. How do the liberal churches prove their position?

A. Generally from the bible.

9. Q. How do the orthodox prove theirs?

A. Exclusively from the bible.

10. Q. What is the main emphasis of the liberal churches?

A. They make little of theology and a great deal of character.

11. Q. Are the liberal churches growing?

A. Not numerically, but their influence has been large in the religious world. They have compelled the orthodox to abandon

many crude and foolish beliefs and practices, and have helped to withdraw the attention of people from theology to science, philosophy and ethics. The liberal churches have rendered religion the inestimable service of recalling her from barren dialectics to concrete realities.

12. Q. What other religious movements are there in this country?

A. Spiritualism; Theosophy; Christian Science, etc.

13. Q. What does Spiritualism teach?

A. That we can communicate with the spirits of the dead.

14. Q. How do they prove the claim?

A. By quotations from the bible and the testimony of men and women now living.

15. Q. Who are these?

A. Generally mediums, who make their living by giving séances or sittings.

16. Q. What is the reputation of these mediums?

A. It is not of the very best.

17. Q. Does Spiritualism prove immortality?

A. No. Only one who has lived forever and ever, without end, can prove immortality and such an one does not exist.[1]

18. Q. What is Theosophy?

A. The doctrine that there are "wise men" or "adepts" or "masters" who have become divinities and who direct human affairs and reveal the future to the living.

19. Q. What are the other doctrines of Theosophy?

A. The doctrine of Karma or Justice, and of Reincarnation.[2]

20. Q. What is the value of Theosophy as a religion?

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[1] See Chapter on Immortality.

[2] We reap in this life as we have sown in some previous existence, is the fundamental idea in Buddhism, and in all the religious philosophies of the Orient.

A. It is a mere speculation.

21. Q. What is Christian Science?

A. The belief that a certain New England woman has recently received a special revelation from God.

22. Q. State the nature of the revelation.

A. Nothing exists but God; God is health and purity; therefore disease and sin are illusions.

23. Q. Is that logical?

A. No; because if God is all *whose* illusions then are sickness and sin?

24. Q. Is disease an illusion of the "mortal mind"?[1]

A. Disease is the effect of a cause or causes, such as drunkenness, debauchery, dirt, etc. If these causes are illusions then are their effects illusions, too.

[1] The Christian Scientists by calling evil "mortal mind" have only changed the name without doing away with the thing.

25. Q. Can the evil effect of drunkenness or dirt be treated away without first removing their causes?

A. It is not possible.

26. Q. What else do Christian Scientists claim?

A. They claim to treat successfully, for a sum of money, all manner of diseases except those pertaining to surgery.[1]

27. Q. What do Christian Scientists do with money?

A. They use it for the necessary wants of the body.

28. Q. Do the Christian Scientists believe in the body?

A. No.

29. Q. What would be an impartial judgment of Christian Science?

A. Like all human systems, it contains both truth and error.

[1] See Mrs. Eddy's defense for going to a dentist; "Miscellaneous."

30. Q. Have we any religious movements in this country from which the supernatural element is altogether absent?

A. There are the Ethical, Independent and Free Religious organizations which make science the highest authority in matters of faith and conduct.

31. Q. What is the nature of their teaching?

A. It is purely practical. To make the highest use of this life without any reference to a life before or a life after; without any reference, either, to gods, demons, heaven or hell.

32. Q. Do they deny God and the future?

A. No; because they know that they do not know enough, as yet, on these questions to speak definitely and positively about them.

33. Q. Is that a proper attitude of the mind?

A. It is also the most hopeful, for, until we know our ignorance, we will not seek for knowledge.[1]

34. Q. Is knowledge of our ignorance the beginning of wisdom?

A. Yes, and the promise of coming enlightenment.[2]

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[1] "Nothing keeps a man from knowledge and wisdom like thinking he has both."—Sir Wm. Temple.

[2] As this catechism is written from the standpoint of the non-supernatural, it will be unnecessary to give in this place a fuller exposition of the philosophy of these Independent Societies.

"If a man holding a belief which he was taught in childhood or persuaded of afterwards, keeps down and pushes away any doubts which arise about it in his mind; purposely avoids the reading of books and the company of men that call in question and discuss it—the life of that man is one long sin against mankind."
—W. K. CLIFFORD.

CHAPTER XI

THE CREEDS

1. Q. What is a creed?

   A. A rule of faith; or an authoritative expression of the doctrines of a church.[1]

2. Q. What is the origin of the word?

   A. It is taken from the first word in the Apostles Creed. (credo—I believe.)

3. Q. What is the origin of the idea?

   A. The differences and disagreements among believers are responsible for the creeds of christendom.[2]

4. Q. How early did dissensions arise in the church?

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[1] Called also a "symbol" or "confession" of faith—"Symbolicum Apostolicum."

[2] It is claimed that Jesus called for a creed when he said: "Every one who will *confess* me before men, him will I also confess before my father who is in heaven."—Matt. x. 32-33: Rom. x. 9-10.

A. The first dissension was between the apostles Peter and Paul; the former representing the Jewish and the latter the Gentile party in the church.

5. Q. Was the dissension serious?

A. The Apostle Paul considered it so for he charged Peter with dissimulation, hypocrisy and *unrighteous* conduct.[1]

6. Q. What was the primary object of a creed?

A. To enforce uniformity of belief; and to excommunicate the heretics.[2]

7. Q. What, then, did these creeds really try to do?

A. To prevent anybody from thinking independently.

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[1] Read the Epistle of Paul to the Galatians; and also, the first chapters of Revelation; and the Acts of the Apostles.

[2] Heresy is from a Greek word and means "to examine," or "to select."

8. Q. Which is considered the oldest Christian creed?

   A. The Apostles' Creed, which we know for certain was not written by the Apostles?

9. Q. Why, then, is it so called?

   A. For the same reason that the Gospels have been ascribed to the Apostles—to give them a greater authority.

10. Q. Who, then, is the author of the Apostle's Creed?

    A. The question of its authorship is involved in as great an obscurity as that of the Gospels.

11. Q. What are the fundamentals in this creed?

    A. Belief in the Trinity; the Immaculate Conception of Jesus; and the resurrection of the flesh.

12. Q. What proofs are given to establish these claims?

    A. None whatever. They are assumed to be true.

13. Q. What is this kind of reasoning called?

A. Deductive; which consists in drawing strong conclusions from imperfect premises.

14. Q. What is the better method of reasoning?

A. The Inductive; which consists in first demonstrating the premises before drawing any conclusions from them.

15. Q. Do the Mohammedans and Buddhists offer proofs for the doctrines in their creeds?

A. No, they assume theirs, too.

16. Q. How are we to know which assumption is the truth?

A. The general custom has been to assume that the creed of the country one is born in is the true one.

17. Q. Is this a good custom?

A. It is a very bad custom, for it deprives us of the greatest privilege of life—the pursuit of truth; it makes truth a denominational or sectarian possession, the creature of climate and geographical boundaries; and it makes us believe that while we ourselves are inspired and chosen of God, all others are heathens.

18. Q. Tell me now of the Nicene creed.

A. This was formulated by an assembly of 318 bishops in the city of Nicaea near Constantinople in the year 325. It excommunicated the Arians[1] and fulminated a curse against them for questioning the doctrine of the Trinity.

19. Q. What is the next important creed?

A. The Athanasian, which is the most unpleasantly dogmatic and intolerant of all ancient creeds and

[1] The followers of Arius who had heretical views about the divinity of Christ.

which is unique in its damnatory clauses. Yet, it was held in high esteem[1] and was sung as a hymn in all the churches, and is still in force in official christendom.

20. Q. What is the creed of the Greek church?

A. The Greek or the Eastern church holds that the Holy Spirit proceeds only from the Father. For this heresy it was excommunicated by the Catholic church, but the Greek church in return excommunicated the Catholic church.

21. Q. What is the Creed of the Church of England?

A. It consists of Thirty-nine Articles adopted at various times and finally authoritatively promulgated in 1628 by Charles I., as "His Majesty's Declaration."

22. Q. What was its object?

[1] See Schaff, Creeds of Christendom, Vol. 1, p. 41.

A. "For the abolishing of diversity of opinions," and to drive out of the country popish and Calvinistic doctrines.

23. Q. Was subscription to the Thirty-nine Articles compulsory in England?

A. Yes. Even the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge required of every graduate to subscribe to the Thirty-nine Articles before he could receive his diploma; a bill of Parliament compelled all teachers and preachers to subscribe to them.

24. Q. Did this bill accomplish its object?

A. No.

25. Q. Can compulsion prevent people from thinking?

A. It can only prevent them from teaching as they think.

26. Q. What are people who think one thing and teach another called?

A. Hypocrites.

27. Q. What follows?

A. That compulsion only makes hypocrites.

28. Q. Which is the most important of modern creeds?

A. The Westminster Creed, formulated by an assembly consisting of one hundred and fifty members elected and convened by an Act of Parliament in 1643 during the brief reign of Presbyterianism in England.

29. Q. What are the leading ideas of this creed?

A. Predestination; salvation of elect infants[1] only; the damnation of all peoples and nations not Christian and the use of physical force against all heretics.

30. Q. How does it define the Doctrine of Damnation?

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[1] Modern Calvinists admit the *probability* of salvation of all infants.—Schaff, Vol. I., p. 795.

A. As a "judicial decree of God" by which "on account of Adam's fall" . . . "God was pleased to ordain" others "to dishonor and wrath" — to "everlasting death" . . . "and their number is so certain and definite that it cannot be either increased or diminished."[1]

31. Q. How does it recommend physical force against heresy?

A. It says: "The civil magistrate hath authority and it is his duty, to take order that the unity and peace be preserved in the church, *that all heresies be suppressed*, all abuses in worship prevented"[2] and Article IV., in Chapter XX, reads: "They (the heretics) may lawfully be called to account,and proceeded against

[1] Original sin was considered so wicked that one of the clergymen declared, "If a man had never been born he would yet have been damned for it."

[2] The American churches have modified this clause.

by *the power of the Civil Magistrate.*" And Verse 109 of the Catechism states that the "Ten Commandments forbid tolerating a false religion."[1]

32. Q. Is an absolutely creedless church possible?

A. No. An organization, whatever its end, must have a platform, a declaration of principles, to serve as a bond of union, which, in the larger sense, is a creed.

33. Q. Why, then, are creeds denounced?

A. Not because they contain a statement of belief, but because the statement is narrow, intolerant and unprogressive.

34. Q. Which is the best creed?

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[1] "It is not only lawful to punish to the death such as labor to subvert the true religion, but the magistrates and people are bound to do so unless they will provoke the wrath of God against themselves."—John Knox, Hist. of Mary I., Queen of England. E. P. Dutton & Co.

A. The creed which is most in accord with the facts of science and which keeps abreast of the *increasing* knowledge of man.

35. Q. State the difference between a creed founded on authority and one founded on science.

A. The one is finished; the other is still growing; the one is an echo of the past, the other is an accent and a voice of the present; the one is a statement, the other is a *movement;* the one can be accepted only on conditions impossible to the reason; the other welcomes all the strain which the progress of knowledge can bring to bear upon it.[1]

36. Q. Should we ever subscribe to a creed which forbids freedom of thought and speech?

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[1] There is a fire-fly in the southern clime,
Which shineth only when upon the wing.
So is it with the mind; when once we rest,
We darken.

—Bailey, in "Festus."

A. No. The dignity of man is in his reason, the dignity of reason is in freedom; to destroy freedom is to destroy reason and without reason we would cease to be human.[1]

37. Q. Why is freedom of speech indispensable?

A. Because without freedom we can never know whether the priest or the teacher says what he wishes to say, or only what he *must* say.

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[1] "Yet one thing there is that ye shall not slay,
Even thought."

—Swinburne.

CHAPTER XII

THE CLERGY

1. Q. What is a clergyman?

   A. A man who has received "holy orders."

2. Q. From whom has he received them?

   A. From the church and by the laying-on of hands.[1]

3. Q. Why is he called a clergyman?

   A. The word is derived from "clerus" or "clericus," which, in Greek, signifies a "lot," or anything by which a vote is cast.

4. Q. What does this signify?

   A. That the clergymen were elected by the casting of lots.[2]

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[1] "Receive the Holy Ghost by the imposition of our hands," is the formula of ordination.

[2] This was the opinion of St. Augustine and also of Jerome. St. Mattias was elected by the Apostles to

5. Q. What other explanation is there?

   A. It has also been supposed that the Greek word "clericus" means "rank" which term was applied to the Aposties and the early teachers to indicate their authority.[1]

6. Q. By what other names is a clergyman known?

   A. Priest, prelate, pontiff, bishop, pope, etc.

7. Q. What do the clergy claim?

   A. That Jesus, the King, has committed "the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven to officers of the church," by virtue whereof "they have power respectively to retain and remit sins" . . .

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take the place of Judas by casting lots. The usual custom was to write the names of the different candidates and put them in a box, then having offered prayers, the box was shaken and the first name that fell out was considered "chosen of the Lord."

[1] Bauer, the German scholar, is the advocate of this theory.

"to shut that kingdom," and "to open it." [1]

8. Q. Have the priests exercised great power in the world?

A. Yes, and have enjoyed also exceptional privileges.

9. Q. What were these privileges?

A. Exemption from civil duties, taxes or contributions to public works. In many countries a clergyman, whatever his crime, could not be made to appear before a civil magistrate.[2]

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[1] See Westminster Creed—

The following words of Jesus are quoted both by Catholics and Protestants to establish this claim: "And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."—Matt. xvi. 19. Compare this with what is said in chapter on "Prayer," about controlling God.

[2] Comp. "Benefit of Clergy in England."

In Catholic countries if any one struck a priest he was excommunicated for life, absolution being withheld from him until at the hour of death.

10. Q. What use have the clergy made of these privileges?

A. On the whole, they have abused them, for which cause they have been deprived of nearly all of their old privileges.

11. Q. How can a man become a clergyman to-day?

A. By submitting to an examination to prove his adherence to the creed of the church to which he applies for admission.

12. Q. Are these examinations as strict as formerly?

A. No, the candidates for holy orders may now exercise what is called "mental reservation."

13. Q. What is that?

A. It is the liberty, while subscribing to the creed just as it is, to read one's own meaning into it—to accept it as true theologically only, and not also philosophically. The candidate may

answer the question, "Do you believe?" by, "I do," while, in his own mind, he may add, "Not as it is commonly interpreted but as I interpret it."

14. Q. Illustrate this by an example.

A. He may say, "I believe in the 'word of God' " but mean by it not only the Christian scriptures to which the creeds limit inspiration, but all that he considers true and pure wherever found. In the same way he may believe in the divinity of Christ, meaning by it, that all good and noble men are divine.

15. Q. Do the people always understand his meaning?

A. If he wished to be understood, he would not resort to "mental reservation."

16. Q. Should a clergyman not in full accord with his church continue to remain in its fellowship?

A. To a conscientious and fine-fibred soul, such a relation would be intolerable.[1]

17. Q. But should not a clergyman wait until his people are ready for the new ideas?

A. Yes, if he means to *follow* his people.

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[1] James Martineau quotes the praise of a Frenchman lavished on this class of clergymen: "Our clergy, to be sure, are all perjured; but, then, how charmingly liberal."—Essays & Reviews, Vol. II., p. 187.

CHAPTER XIII

PRAYER AND SALVATION

1. Q. What is prayer?

   A. It is a supplication addressed to God or a desire for communion with him.

2. Q. Do people ever pray also to the laws of nature?

   A. No.

3. Q. Or to great ideals or visions?

   A. No; prayer is always addressed to a person, because a person alone can hear and answer prayer.

4. Q. Do all who pray believe in a personal God?

   A. They should; for if God be not a person, he would not be different from the laws of nature or the ideals of the mind.

5. Q. What is a person?

   A. One who knows that he is himself and no other.

6. Q. Can God be a person?

   A. He cannot be a God and a person at the same time.

7. Q. Why?

   A. To be a god is to be infinite; to be a person is to be finite. The infinite cannot be conscious of itself, for such consciousness would imply that it distinguished itself from something else, and was not, therefore, the "All!" To be able to say, "This is I," the infinite must also be able to say, "That is not I," which would mean that the infinite was not infinite.

8. Q. Can there not be an infinite person?

   A. No, as there cannot be an infinite finite.

9. Q. How did the habit of prayer originate?

   A. It originated in the desire of people to appease the anger and secure the favor of invisible beings.

10. Q. Give an example.

   A. At the close of a long drouth, the Pope, Archbishop or minister composes a prayer for rain, which is addressed to God, believing that he permitted the drouth and can be entreated to discontinue it.

11. Q. Are such prayers ever answered?

   A. Yes, because a drouth cannot last forever.

12. Q. Does it not happen frequently that while some are praying for one thing others are as earnestly praying for just the opposite?

   A. Yes, people are asking God *to do* in one place what others some-

where else are just as earnestly entreating or advising him *not* to do.

13. Q. What do such prayers imply?

A. That God is an individual ready to adapt himself to the convenience of everybody.

14. Q. Has God any control over the weather?

A. No more than over the law of gravity.

15. Q. Do people ever pray to have the law of gravity suspended for their sake?

A. Not any more.

16. Q. Why?

A. They have learned that the law of gravitation is inviolable.

17. Q. When will they stop praying about the weather?

A. When they learn that the laws governing it are equally inviolable.

18. Q. Is it as useless to pray for wisdom, knowledge and goodness?

A. Yes, for these virtues cannot be given to us—they are acquired through long effort.

19. Q. But does not prayer help some people to acquire these gifts?

A. They *think* it does, just as an Asiatic thinks he owes all his good fortune to the amulet on his person or the tattoo on his arm; or the zealot, that he owes his to the Virgin Mary, or to the candles he burns on some saint's altar.

20. Q. What is meant by prayer as praise?

A. God, it is said, demands that his creatures should address him continually in terms of glorification and endearment, and therefore one object of prayer is to satisfy this desire of God.

21. Q. Does such an idea do honor to any person?

A. No. A really great and good being would grow weary of the genuflections and laudations of interested votaries.

22. Q. Where did such an idea come from?

A. From the Orient, where the sultans can only be approached with prostrations, presents and salaams.

23. Q. What is the moral argument against prayer?

A. It makes men look for help from without and by miracle and thus cripples and maims their manhood.

24. Q. What else?

A. It is an attempt to corrupt God by offering him bribes. When we ask God to do better for us than we deserve, we ask him to do us a favor for which we offer sweet words of praise; build churches;

give money; go on a pilgrimage, etc.

25. Q. Is prayer, then, a petition for a favor?

A. Yes, because it is said that we have no rights and that God can, if he so wishes, refuse us everything.

26. Q. Is salvation a favor, too?

A. Yes, as shown by the malefactor on the cross, who received the gift of salvation a few moments before he expired.

27. Q. What are the views of Paul on this question?

A. He says: "That a man is justified by faith without the works of the law, for to him that worketh not, but believeth, his faith is counted for righteousness;" the inference being that we cannot, by anything we do, merit salvation. And the Westminster Creed says: "Much less can

men not professing the Christian religion, be saved, *be they never so diligent to frame their lives according to the light of nature;* and to assert and maintain that they can is very pernicious and is to be detested."[1]

28. Q. What is the effect of such teaching?

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[1] Luther said: "Every doer of the law and every moral worker is accursed, for he walketh in the presumption of his own righteousness. He that says the gospel requires works for salvation, I say, flat and plain, he is a liar."—Table Talk.

And John Wesley, the founder of the Methodist Church, was as positive in his opinion that salvation is not something which we may conquer for ourselves, for he says:

"We are well pleased that our parishioners grow more diligent and honest, that they practice both justice and mercy; in a word that they are moral men; but the truth is, the Methodists know and teach that *all this is nothing* before God."—John Wesley's Works, Vol. III., p. 99.

"Salvation is an act of mercy and may be granted even to one who has no merit."—"Catholic Belief," p. 363; Father Lambert.

The doctrine of salvation by grace alone is unmistakably taught in the following texts from the New Testament: John vi. 44; Ephs. ii. 8. This is also the

A. It makes morality, character and justice secondary to church rites, prayers and dogmas[1] and they imply also that we may impose our will upon God.

29. Q. Explain that point.

A. The Atheist says, there is no God; the Deist says, There is a God but he has no relation whatever with us; the Theist says, God exists and rules over men, but by prayers and praise, penance and sacrifices, we can influence his will. Consequently, all these views amount to a practical denial of God.

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position of St. Augustine in his work on "Grace." It is this doctrine which has placed so high a value on the sacraments and offices of the church, as well as the mediation of the priest as a means of salvation.

[1] "The Catholic religion is an order to obtain heaven by begging, because it would be too troublesome to earn it. The priests are the brokers for this transaction."—Zimmern's Life of Schopenhauer, p. 124.

This criticism applies with equal force to the Protestant denominations.

30. Q. How?

A. There is no difference between a God who does not exist, and one who exists only outside of human affairs, or one who can be controlled by us.

31. Q. What is the least desirable form of prayer?

A. Public prayer, because it is not silent but loud; not spontaneous, but formal; not personal, but professional; not short, but long; not free, but compulsory; and because it is oftener addressed to the congregation than to God. Jesus said distinctly that we should not pray in public.

32. Q. What is true prayer?

A. To learn diligently the laws of life and to obey them.

33. Q. What should we teach people to do instead of praying?

A. To think.[1]

[1] The late Master of Balliol said, that the longer he lived the less he prayed, but the more he thought. Read also Emerson's essay on Self-Reliance.

The lost, according to Dante, are those who can no longer think.

Kant says that, "He who has made great moral progress ceases to pray, for honesty is one of his principal maxims." He said also that to pray before the people is "to appeal to their sensuality"—it is to "stoop down to them."

"I ought to sit and think, and then write a discourse to the American clergy, showing them the ugliness and unprofitableness of theology and churches at this day, and the glory and sweetness of the moral nature, out of whose pale they are almost wholly shut. If I go into the churches in these days, I usually find the preacher, in proportion to his intelligence, to be cunning, so that the whole institution sounds hollow."—
FROM EMERSON'S DIARY, 1838.

CHAPTER XIV

DEATH

1. Q. How long has there been death in the world?

   A. As long as there has been life.

2. Q. What is the relation of life to death?

   A. They are the different manifestations of the same power.

3. Q. What is that?

   A. Movement.

4. Q. What happens to the body at death?

   A. It begins to return to life again. The particles of which the body is composed dissolve, separate and pass into their original elements—water, lime, iron, phosphorus, etc. Thus disengaged they mix with the sun and the

air, and, having renewed their youth, return to combine again in new bodies.

5. Q. Do they always meet in the same body?

   A. No. If they did, the dead would rise again.

6. Q. Is death a punishment?

   A. Not any more than life.

7. Q. Why do people fear death?

   A. They have been taught to look upon it as the curse of God for the sins of man, and that it marks the beginning of an irrevocable doom; but people are rapidly outgrowing these fears.

8. Q. Is death desirable?

   A. Not until we know more about it.

9. Q. But is it always a misfortune?

   A. When it ends a useful career, separates lovers and makes orphans of children, it seems a calamity. But when it brings deliverance

to the weary, the aged and the suffering, it is a blessing.[1]

10. Q. Could there be any progress in the world without death?

A. As the old leaves must fall from the branches to make room for the new and greener ones, so must we die to make place for the better men and women of the future.

11. Q. How may we learn to overcome the fear of death?

A. 1. By trying to accommodate ourselves to those laws of nature,

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[1] "Among the many half-pagan legends that were connected with Ireland during the middle ages, one of the most beautiful is that of the islands of life and death. In a certain lake in Munster, it is said there were two islands; into the first death could never enter, but age and sickness, and the weariness of life, were all known there, and they did their work until the inhabitants, tired of their immortality, learned to look upon the opposite island as upon a haven of repose; they launched their barks upon its gloomy waters; they touched its shore and they were at rest."—Hist. of European Morals, Vol. I., p. 214; Lecky.

which will not accommodate themselves to us.

2. By cultivating in us the same mind that was also in the bravest and noblest of our race.

3. By remembering that we are here to learn how to live and not how to die.

12. Q. What is the philosophical conception of death?

A. That it either secures happiness or ends suffering.

13. Q. How did Socrates view death?

A. That if it ended life, it was not a misfortune; but that if it freed the soul from the body, it certainly was "the greatest of boons." [2]

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[1] "There is no subject on which the sage will think less than death."—Spinoza Ethics, IV., 67.

[2] "Death does not concern us, for when we are, death is not, and when death is, we are not."—Epicurus; Diog. Laert. X., 27.

Noble minds are free from "the superstitious fears

14. Q. Is it wrong to mourn for the dead?

A. It is natural; for, while we must face our fate like men, we must also feel it like men.[1]

15. Q. How may we triumph over death?

A. By loving and serving some noble cause in which we may continue to live long after we have passed away.[2]

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that are the nightmare of the weak."—Hist. of European Morals, Vol. I., p. 213; Lecky.

To lose what we cannot miss is not an evil.

[1] The brave man is not he who feels no fear, but he whose noble heart its fear subdues.—Baillie.

Malcolm: Dispute it like a man:
Macduff: I shall do so;
But I must also feel it as a man.
—Shakespeare.

[2] "By having an aim that is rooted in eternity, we need not mind the transiency of life."—Paul Carns; "Whence and Whither," p. 184.

"A noble human life does not end on earth with death. It continues in the minds and deeds of friends as well as in the thought and activity of the nation."—G. Freytag, "The Lost Manuscript."

16. Q. Who have been the greatest benefactors of man?

A. Those who have relieved his mind of one more fear and helped him a step further on the road to knowledge and freedom.

CHAPTER XV

IMMORTALITY

1. Q. What does immortality mean?

   A. Deathlessness, or life without end.

2. Q. Does it mean that men will never die?

   A. No; but that they will live forever after death.

3. Q. In the same form as now?

   A. That is a disputed question.

4. Q. Will the body, too, live again and forever?

   A. It is generally claimed that the soul alone is immortal.

5. Q. What is the soul?

   A. According to popular views it is a spark, a flame or an essence temporarily lodged in the body,

but which, at death, returns to its author—God

6. Q. Have all men a soul?

   A. It is so believed.

7. Q. Have the animals a soul too?

   A. Few people believe they have.

8. Q. Can the body live without the soul?

   A. No.

9. Q. Can the soul without the body?

   A. People think it can.

10. Q. Have they any knowledge of it?

    A. Not exactly.

11. Q. Has anything been ever seen without a body of some kind?

    A. No; though some claim to have seen spirits.

12. Q. Can we see anything that has neither form, color, nor extension?

    A. It is not possible.

13. Q. Can we even *think* of a spirit without giving it form and body in our mind?

A. We cannot.

14. Q. What follows?

A. That soul and body are, so far as we have a right to speak or think, inseparable, and that, if one is immortal, the other must be so too.

15. Q. Is the desire for immortality general?

A. Yes, but not universal. The ancient Jews evidently had no clear concept of another life; neither have the Chinese of today.

16. Q. State the accepted doctrine of immortality?

A. The soul, at death, leaves the body and goes to another world, to live there evermore.

17. Q. What is this other world also called?

A. Heaven, Paradise, The Isles of the Blest, and so on.

18. Q. What kind of a place is it?

A. There are as many different views of heaven as there are religions.

19. Q. What are some of them?

A. To the Buddhist, heaven means the cessation of all desire, or Nirvana; to the Mohammedan, it is a place of pleasure and dance; to the Christians—an eternal Sabbath.

20. Q. Is everybody expected to go to heaven?

A. No; only those, it is claimed, who have the true faith; all others, according to the creeds, will go to hell.

21. Q. Where is that?

A. That, too, is in the other world.

22. Q. Will good and great men and women who have not the "true faith" be excluded from heaven?

A. The creeds say they will.[1] And hence, the hope of immortality for the majority of people is not a *hope* at all.

23. Q. Are heaven and hell both eternal?

A. That is the ordinary belief.[2]

24. Q. What other view is there of the other world?

A. That there is neither a heaven nor a hell, but that the other world or life is the continuation of this.

25. Q. Will it be a better world than this?

A. It will if we make it so.

26. Q. Does this view deny the possibility of a conscious hereafter?

A. No, but it leaves the question open.

27. Q. What are the arguments in favor of a conscious immortality?

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[1] "Peoples earth with demons, hell with men
And heaven with slaves." —Shelley.

[2] Henry Ward Beecher was the first among modern orthodox preachers to protest against this doctrine.—Comp.: The Author's "The Passing of Orthodox Religion."

A. One of the strongest is that the belief in it is universal.[1]

28. Q. Does that prove it?

A. No, many universal beliefs have turned out to be illusions, e. g., the belief that man and the world were specially created by divine fiat; that the sun, the moon and the stars were made to give light to our planet and to revolve about it; and the belief in witchcraft, magic, alchemy, etc.[2]

29. Q. What is the next argument?

A. It is said that man, as a soul or a thinking mind, is too precious, not to be preserved forever.

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[1] Since all religions maintain immortality, then, if there is really no such thing the whole world is deluded. This is the argument which Pomponatius of Padua answered by saying: "As there are three religions—those of Moses, Jesus and Mohammed—they are all three false and then the whole world is deluded, or two, at least, are false, and then the majority are deluded."

[2] Even Lord Bacon, the founder of the Inductive Method, and Sir Thomas Browne and Sir Matthew Hale, shared the popular faith in witches.

30. Q. Does that prove his immortality?

A. Not any more than Caesar's opinion of himself proved his divinity.

31. Q. What is the next argument?

A. The moral argument, which is the strongest.

32. Q. State that.

A. As there is much undeserved suffering in this world, we instinctively look forward to another where all accounts shall be squared; where the tears shall be wiped from the eyes of the sorrowing, and loved ones shall meet again.

33. Q. Is this argument conclusive?

A. It is very strong, but not conclusive. If God is as good and as powerful now as he will ever be, and yet permits crime and sorrow, there is no reason to expect a radical change in his management of the universe at some future time.

34. Q. What is the proper conception of an after life?

A. That all we now think, say and do will go to build the world of the future, in which we shall all live again and forever as influences, tendencies, examples and moral and intellectual forces. We are the continuation of the life that has preceded us, and the source of the life that shall follow us. The soul of man is the sum of all his faculties and powers, his thoughts and acts and affections. These, no more than the particles which compose his body, perish at death, but become incorporated into new forms of life, and so on forever.[1]

35. Q. What effect would such a belief have upon us?

[1] Death appears under this aspect no longer as an annihilation; for our soul is as little wiped out as the law of causation can be suspended."—Paul Carus, "Whence and Whither," p. 135.

A. It would encourage us to cultivate and treasure up only what is true and noble—to become the brain and soul of the future.[1]

[1] When we have outgrown the illusion that existence is limited to our individual person, when we expand our being into that of humanity, which is immortal, and through which we continue to live forever—death will, indeed, be no more than "the blinking of an eyelid, which does not interrupt sight."

"Whoever hesitates to utter that which he thinks the highest truth, lest it should be too much in advance of the time, may reassure himself by looking at his acts from an impersonal point of view."—HERBERT SPENCER.

CHAPTER XVI

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

1. Q. Tell me something about the Ten Commandments.

   A. It is believed both by Christians and Jews that the deity with his own finger, on the top of Mount Sinai, about 5000 years ago, inscribed the Ten Commandments on two tables of stone.

2. Q. Upon whose testimony is this interesting story credited?

   A. Upon that of a man called Moses, who claims he was present at the time.

3. Q. Upon whose testimony is *his* word accepted?

   A. Upon his own; that is, if he is the author of the first five books of the bible. If he is not, and many Christian scholars have their doubts on the subject, then, we are deprived even of the testi-

mony of Moses that God wrote the Ten Commandments as above described.

4. Q. If Moses did not compose the Pentateuch, who did?

   A. No one seems to know definitely.

5. Q. Then there is only anonymous testimony about the Ten Commandments?

   A. That is all; but it is enough for people who are educated to believe without questioning.

6. Q. Why do they refuse to question?

   A. They have been told that to believe without questioning is to show great reverence for God and his word, and that to doubt is a great crime punishable with death.[1]

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[1] "He who possesses this faith (the Christian faith) is relieved of the obligation of investigation or examination, for God in commanding us to believe does not wish us to weigh his reasons or judge his motives. It would be folly when God affirms anything to exact from him reasons why we should believe his word."—Catechism of Holy Council of Trent, page 8.

7. Q. Tell me more about the Ten Commandments.

A. It is believed that Moses brought down from the mountain the two tables of stone upon which God had inscribed the Ten Commandments, and that in a moment of irritation he threw them down and broke them in pieces.

8. Q. Is it possible?

A. There is nothing impossible to the credulous, except when it is found in a religion or a sect not their own.

9. Q. Continue.

A. God asked for a new set of tables to write upon, and Moses hewed two tables of stone "like unto the first," and carried them again to the top of the mountain.[1] But on this as on the former occasion, he forbade, upon penalty of instant death,

[1] Exodus, xxxiv, 1-5.

anyone to follow him, or to be present during his interview with God.[1]

10. Q. What became of these two tables of stone containing the handwriting of God?

A. They are lost.

11. Q. If the first set of tables were broken, and the second are lost, how do we know what they contained?

A. We have no way of knowing, but where knowledge fails there is faith.[2]

12. Q. Does believing a thing make it true?

A. If it did, all religions, even the most superstitious, would be true.[3]

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[1] "Whosoever touches (approaches) the mountain shall surely be put to death.—Exodus xix, 12.

[2] The faith which is least dependent upon knowledge has been most exalted by the clergy. The best Christian is he who can believe the unbelievable—*Credo qui incredibile.*

[3] There is not a doctrine or dogma, however absurd, but commands the confidence of hundreds and thousands of people.

13. Q. Is the authority of the Ten Commandments very high?

A. The Jews and the Christians believe that the Ten Commandments contain the oldest and the most perfect moral teaching known to history, and that before the Ten Commandments were given there was scarcely any morality in the world outside the Jewish people.

14. Q. What is the First Commandment?

A. "Thou shalt have no other Gods before me."

15. Q. Comment upon it.

A. It is not reasonable to suppose that an Infinite and Absolute Being would find it necessary to caution people against other gods. Only a being afraid of rivals and not certain of his own ability to stand his ground would resort to measures of self protection. It is a humiliating appeal to mortals not to desert him for other gods.

It also suggests a vanity unbecoming to a Universal Being. It is, besides, an admission that there are other gods. Only a tribal, partisan god, and one in competition with other gods, would aspire to be the exclusive god of any one people. It is also a most unfair command, in that, it is not an argument to enlighten the mind or convince the reason, but a *mandate.*

16. Q. What does the Second Commandment enjoin?

A. To abstain from making "any graven image or any likeness of anything which is in heaven above or in the earth below, etc." This Commandment, like many others in the Decalogue, has never been observed. Yet it has been quoted to discourage art and retard industrial progress. The Catholics use many graven images in their worship, and so

did the Jews during their sojourn in the wilderness.

17. Q. Do you mean to say that the Jews, notwithstanding the Second Commandment, made graven images?

A. Yes, the brazen serpent, for instance, which they were commanded to make and to use as a cure for diseases of the body.

18. Q. Are there any other Commandments in the Decalogue which were violated by divine order?

A. The Commandments:
Thou shalt not steal,
Thou shalt not commit adultery,
Thou shalt not bear false witness,
were frequently made null and void by counter commandments from the same source, to "spoil" the peoples they came in contact with; to kill and exterminate the Canaanites, or one another, which they did immediately after Moses came down

from the mountain with the Ten Commandments.[1]

In commanding the Jews to seize the wives and daughters of their enemies; and in constantly representing the Gentile races as abominably corrupt, when all history shows their superiority in civilization to these desert tribes, the God of the bible breaks also the commandments against adultery and against bearing false witness.

19. Q. Speak about the Fourth Commandment.

A. This Commandment sets apart Saturday as holy, and forbids all work on that day, such as even gathering wood to kindle a fire. Only the orthodox Jews observe this day. The Christians observe Sunday.

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[1] We read in Exodus xxxii, 27-29, that 50,000 Jews were slaughtered on that occasion by their own brethren.

20. Q. By what authority have the Christians changed Saturday to Sunday?

A. They have not the shadow of an excuse for taking liberties with the Ten Commandments, said to have been written by God himself. It was not likely when the deity appointed Saturday that he meant to let the Christians change it to Sunday.

21. Q. But why do the Christians observe Sunday?

A. Because they believe that on that day Jesus arose from the grave.

22. Q. Why did God set apart Saturday.

A. Because on that day he rested.

23. Q. The Christian Sunday, then, cannot possibly be observed for the same reason that God set apart Saturday?

A. No, the two days have two entirely different objects.

24. Q. What other Commandments are there?

A. The Fifth which says: "Honor thy father and thy mother that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee." This is imperfect, because it leaves out the duties of parents to their children, and in the second place, by holding out material rewards it taints the obedience which it commands. Filial and parental love transcend considerations of a recompense.

25. Q. What is the Third Commandment?

A. "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain." It is very likely that the Jews did not wish other peoples to know the name of their God, fearing that they might alienate His affections from them or bribe Him to go over to their side. The Jew

was educated not to pronounce or mention the name of his God."[1]

26. Q. Is not this Commandment quoted against swearing?

A. It is, but in the bible both the prophets and the apostles often swear in God's name, and in all Christian countries to this day the oath requires people to call God to witness.

27. Q. What is the scientific explanation of the origin of the Ten Commandments?

A. Historical and scientific research has traced the greater number of Old Testament laws, legends, and institutions, to Babylonian sources. The Jews invented little, but borrowed and appropriated a great deal from their

[1] Among many oriental tribes the names of the gods were jealously guarded as one would the secret of one's powers or success, to prevent others from enjoying the same advantages.

conquerors, the Assyrians, Persians and Babylonians![1]

28. Q. What is the moral value of the Ten Commandments?

A. Its influence for good has been greatly impaired, as stated above, by counter commandments. In the next place, its failure to touch upon other important duties detracts greatly from its value. There is nothing in the Ten Commandments about the duty of intellectual honesty, about love and justice toward all men whether they believe as we do or not—about peace, about equality, about free government, about children's rights, about humanity to animals, about the sick and insane, etc., etc. The abridgment of the Ten Commandments into "Love to God and love to man," is not quite

[1] Read the Commentaries on the *Hammurabic* code recently dug out by Assyriologists.

honest, for the reason that in the Ten Commandments "man" means the Jew only.[1]

[1] It is one of the characteristic doctrines of both Testaments that the non-Jewish, or at least the heathen nations are the enemies of God and should be hated.

CHAPTER XVII

THE CHURCH AND THE REPUBLIC

1. Q. Is a republican form of government scriptural?

   A. There is not a single text either in the old or new testament which may be fairly quoted in defense of popular or republican government.

2. Q. To what form of government does the bible lend its support?

   A. To unlimited monarchy, which is another term for despotism.

3. Q. What is the teaching of the word of God as to the source of power?

   A. That it is from above, and that the man in whom this power is invested is an agent of God to whom is due absolute submission.

4. Q. By what names are the agents of God represented in the bible?

A. They are called kings or priests. Sometimes the king is also a priest and the priest is also a king.

5. Q. Quote one of the most important bible texts in support of monarchy or despotism?

A. St. Paul says: "The powers that be are ordained of God. Whoever therefore resisteth the power resisteth the ordinance of God, and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation."[1]

6. Q. What comments may be made on this text?

A. (1) It does not distinguish between just or unjust power, but is an indiscriminate and unjust exaltation of all power, simply because it exists.

(2) By saying that "all powers that be are ordained of God," the text forbids all discussion of the

[1] Romans, Chap xiii, 1-2.

methods by which power is acquired, thus confounding might with right, and success with justice.

(3) The text denies the people the right of protest or resistance, on the ground that to do so would be rebellion against God.

(4) It does not ask for free and voluntary loyalty, but for compulsory submission, in as much as it menaces the disobedient with damnation.

7. Q. Have the words of Paul in the bible ever been quoted by kings and despots in support of their cause?

A. They have been the favorite texts of political and ecclesiastical tyranny.

8. Q. Would it be fair to conclude if the above texts represent the spirit of Christianity, that Christianity is in favor of despotism rather than of democracy?

A. Yes. Christianity as an oriental religion was prejudiced in favor of the political institutions of the orient, and was mentally incapable of appreciating the freer forms of government which prevailed, even in bible times, in Greece and Rome.

9. Q. What is the republican theory of the origin of power?

A. That it is derived from the consent of the governed.

10. Q. Does a republic recognize the peoples' right to resist their rulers or change their form of government?

A. Certainly. According to the republican theory. "All political power is inherent in the people, and all free governments are founded on their authority and instituted for their benefit; and that they have at all times an undeniable and indefeasible right to alter their form of government in such

manner as they may think expedient."

11. Q. Is that consistent with St. Paul's teaching that "whoever resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God, and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation?"

A. It is in direct opposition to it. The republican ideal of government could never have entered the mind of Paul. Being educated as a Jew and an Asiatic, he looked upon the king as the Lord's anointed, and to resist the king was to resist God. This is also the teaching of the old testament.

12. Q. Are we indebted, then, to the Jews or to the bible for our republic?

A. No. We are indebted to the Greeks and Romans who were pagans.

13. Q. Why is not a Greek or a Roman institution as acceptable to Christians as a Jewish one?

A. Because no institution is divine according to Christians which is not of Jewish origin.

14. Q. Is that a sensible view to take?

A. It is the view of orthodox Christendom.

15. Q. Tell me how America, being a Christian country, came to adopt a pagan form of government?

A. Our revolutionary leaders, Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Paine, Thomas Jefferson, George Washington, were not orthodox church men. Franklin, perhaps the greatest American we have produced, was openly out of sympathy with Christianity; Jefferson refused to affiliate with the Christian church; Paine was aggressively opposed to it, and

[1] It was the spirit of the Eighteenth Century, a century of philosophical inquiry, which gave our revolutionary leaders their broader views. Had they been susceptible to clerical influences, or had they consulted Moses and Paul, there would have been a king here "by the Grace of God," as there is one in most Christian countries.

Washington declared in one of his messages to Congress that this country was "not founded on the Christian religion."[1]

16. Q. Do the Germans, the Russians, etc., believe that their form of government is scriptural?

A. Yes, and they can prove it from the example of the Jews and the words of Paul. The Czar, the Kaiser, the King, the Emperor, all claim to have been appointed to rule over their people by the deity himself.

17. Q. Do not some people argue that God is a monarchist in one country and a republican in another?

A. Yes. People advance many foolish arguments to prove that God agrees with them every time they change their institutions.

18. Q. Sum up this chapter on the church and the republic.

A. (1) The establishment of a republic

in Christian America is a most significant departure from biblical ideals.

(2) The more Christian a European country is the more despotic is its government, as for example Russia—"holy Russia."[1]

(3) The bible, claiming to be God's word, is compelled for its own sake to espouse the cause of autocracy and authority, hence it cannot be—it never has been —the text book of intellectual, religious or political, liberty.[2]

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[1] If Christianity is responsible for the freer institutions of England and America, why has it not done the same for Spain or Russia? If the latter people themselves are to be blamed, and not Christianity, for their *backwardness*, then to the English or Americans themselves and not to Christianity, must be given the credit of their free institutions.

[2] A republican, or, a pagan (not a Jewish) form of government in America is something the clergy will have difficulty in explaining. Why were not bible models followed? Why was not Paul's theory of the origin of political power adopted? Why was not the deity permitted to choose a king whose descendants could rule

over us forever? Were the clergy napping while the heathen Greeks and Romans were converting us to self-government? How is it that our most important document, the Constitution, is without the name of God, as well as contrary to His express instructions on the subject of government? Yet it will be safe to predict that in the future as in the past, clergymen will not hesitate to claim that we owe our political freedom to Christianity; that God is the author of our republic; that without the bible we could never have produced a Constitution, and that Paul's "and they that resist (the powers that be) shall receive to themselves damnation" is only another way of saying that the people "have at all times an undeniable and indefeasible right to alter their form of government in such manner as they may think expedient."

"It is a prevalent opinion that woman owes her present high position to Christianity. I used to believe this opinion, but in the first three centuries I have not been able to see that Christianity had any favorable effect on the position of women, but, on the contrary, that it tended to lower their character and contract the range of their activity."—PRINCIPAL DONALDSON, *Contemporary Review*, September, 1889.

CHAPTER XVIII

CHRISTIANITY AND WOMAN

1. Q. Is it true that Christianity has helped the cause of woman more than any other agency in the world?

   A. It is not. Christianity has rendered no direct service to woman. The most it has done for woman has been to consent to the reforms which other agencies secured for her.

2. Q. How, then, do you account for the fact that the position of woman is more advanced in Christian than in non-Christian countries?

   A. By the same way that we explain, for instance, the fact that the stage, notwithstanding the bitter opposition of the church, is more prosperous in Christian than in non-Christian countries. The

same may be said of science and political and social reforms. The church has simply been unable to suppress the progressive energies of European races.[1]

3. Q. But is there any reason why Christianity should be prejudiced against woman?

A. Christianity, as already stated, being Asiatic, both in its sympathies and antipathies, announces no original position on the question of woman, but confirms the prevailing prejudice against woman in oriental countries. Besides, Christianity as an offshoot of Judaism, which is an Asiatic institution, accepts the latter's attitude on all great questions as infallible.

4. Q. What is the position of woman in the Bible?

[1] Race and climate have been the chief factors in the evolution of national institutions. Religions too, have played their part, but they have followed rather than guided the forces of civilization.

A. In the Old Testament she occupies a decidedly inferior position. The rights which men prize the most are denied to her. She is excluded from religion as well as from politics, and is placed on a level with a man's slaves or chattels.[1]

5. Q. Quote some instances from the Bible showing the treatment accorded to woman.

A. The Jew was required to repair to Jerusalem once a year, he and all his belongings, but the wife was not privileged to accompany her husband. Again, the Lord discriminates against women when he says: "Three times in the year all the *males* shall appear before the Lord thy

[1] The Ten Commandments, one of the most authoritative documents of both Judaism and Christianity, lists woman with horses, oxen, asses, servants, etc.: "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house; thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his ox, nor his ass," etc.—Exodus xx, 17.

God."[1] Again, a mother who gave birth to a daughter was required to abstain from religious services for a time twice as long as was required for the mother of a boy.[2] Once more, it was considered unclean for a woman to become a mother. "She shall touch no hallowed thing, nor come into the sanctuary," says the Bible. Only after she had made atonement for the sin of motherhood by offering a lamb or a pair of pigeons, etc., was she forgiven. And again, in demanding offerings of beasts and human beings,[3] the money value to the Lord, represented by the male was

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[1] Exodus xxiii, 17.

[2] "But if she bear a maid-child then she shall be unclean two weeks, and she shall continue in the blood of her purifying three score and six days." The time required for a son was thirty-three days.—Lev. xii, 5.

[3] The Old Testament demands human sacrifices. Read Lev. xxvii, 28-29.

twice that represented by the female.[1]

6. Q. In the "story of creation" is not Eve, the first woman, on an equality with Adam, the first man?

A. No. Adam, or man is represented as the end of creation. Eve, or woman, only as a means to this end—as necessary to the happiness of man.[2] Besides, the first words addressed to her by the deity announce her perpetual bondage to man, "And he shall rule over her."[3]

7. Q. What was the position of Jesus on this question?

A. There is no proof that the question interested Jesus at all. His Apostles were all men; he ab-

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[1] Lev. xxvii, 1-14.

[2] "It is not good that the man should be alone."—Gen. ii, 18. It does not occur to the author of Genesis that it is not good for woman to be alone either.

[3] Gen. iii, 16.

stained from marriage; rebuked his mother,[1] and made no protest whatsoever against the deplorable and degraded subjection of woman which in his day and country was at its worst.

8. Q. Has the failure of Jesus to appoint women as his apostles influenced the Church?

A. It certainly has. Both the Catholic and the Protestant churches have stubbornly refused the ministry to women. A masculine priesthood has been represented as alone being acceptable to God.[2]

9. Q. What was the Apostle Paul's attitude respecting woman?

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[1] "Woman, what have I to do with thee?" John ii, 4. He calls his mother "Woman," and intimates that he is much superior to her.

[2] The State has been more respectful to women than the Church. While women have sat on thrones, they have never been allowed to officiate at the altar. Some Protestant Churches, however, are growing more tolerant, and are beginning to admit women into the ministry.

A. He was unusually unjust to woman; for he suggests that there is as much difference between man and woman, as between man and Christ.[1]

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[1] "The head of man is Christ. The head of woman is man."—1 Corinth. xi, 3. He also says that man is in the image of the deity, and is his glory, while woman is the glory of man.—1 Corinth. xi, 7. Other sayings of Paul on this question follow:

"Let the women learn in silence with all subjection." Nothing could be more drastic against the right of woman to question or to speak in her own defence than the above apostolic prohibition.

"But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence." According to Paul, authority belongs to man alone, and it is *usurpation* for a woman to use a little of it herself. Silence is the only privilege Paul concedes to woman.

Again Paul argues: "For Adam was formed first, then Eve." This is the oriental doctrine of the rights of the firstborn. "And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression." So the entire blame is shirked upon woman. Paul suppresses here the truth that Adam was just as much deceived by what the devil said to them as Eve. Woman, then, according to this inspired oracle, is the *bête noire*. But, adds Paul, "She shall be saved by child-bearing." Does he mean that is the only virtue or service woman is capable of? Read 1 Timothy ii, 11-15.

10. Q. Are there any great female characters in the Bible?

A. The author of the *History of European Morals*[1] remarks that the women of both the Old and the New Testaments are of a low order and certainly far inferior to those of Roman history or Greek poetry.[2]

11. Q. What was the attitude of the early Christian church toward women?

A. Tertullian[3] addresses women in these words: "Thou art the devil's gate, the betrayer of the tree, the first deserter of the

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[1] Lecky.

[2] A list of Bible women follows: Sarah, the persecutor of Hagar; Rebekah, who conspired to ruin her son Esau; Rachel, who abused her father's confidence; Rahab, the harlot, praised for her treachery; Esther, one of the most revengeful of women, who advised a general massacre of all the non-Jews in the land. There are other women mentioned who appear in a more enviable light: Miriam, Ruth, Mary, Martha, but the rôles played by these women appear insignificant compared to those assumed by their contemporaries in the pagan world.

[3] The first Latin Christian teacher.

divine law."[1] The same theologian sees no reason for her existence, and he adds: "How much better two men could live and converse together than a man and a woman." St. Ambrose says "Remember that God took a rib out of Adam's body, not a part of his soul, to make her." Other Christian teachers agree with Paul that she must veil her head because she is not, as is man, in God's image.[2]

12. Q. Has not the Christian church in our day championed woman's interests?

A. On the contrary, it is a regrettable

[1] The Christian fathers have made "Eve" synonymous with "deceiver."

[2] A bishop in the sixth century, at the Council of Macon, argued that women have no souls. In the same century, the Council of Auxerre decided that women should wear gloves before they touched the holy sacrament. This prejudice has come down to theologians of more recent date. Luther, for example, says that, "no gown worse becomes a woman than her desire to be wise."

fact that the church has been an hindrance to her emancipation.

13. Q. In what way?

A. For a long time, both in England and in America, to ask rights for women was associated with infidelity.[1] A pastoral letter in 1837 referred to the "degeneracy and ruin" of the female sex because it demanded equal rights with man. The poet Whittier wrote an eloquent poem in answer to this clerical attack.

14. Q. Who have been the friends of the cause of woman?

A. In all countries her deepest sympathizers have been those whom the clergy brand as "heretics."[2]

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[1] "Throughout this protracted and disgraceful attack on American womanhood, the clergy baptised each new insult and act of injustice in the name of the Christian religion, and uniformly asked God's blessing on proceedings that would have put to shame an assembly of Hottentots."—History of Woman Suffrage.

[2] Harriet Martineau, Lucretia Mott, Elizabeth Cady

15. Q. Sum up the attitude of Christianity toward woman.

A. (1) Christianity, like Judaism, in representing woman as the first sinner who conspired with the devil to bring about the fall and ruin of man, has placed woman in a false light.

(2) This theological prejudice against woman has influenced the conduct of the State toward woman, and made her a victim of unjust laws.[1]

16. Q. What was the position of woman before Christianity?

Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, Mary Wollstonecraft, Frances Wright; and, Shelley, John Stuart Mill, Robert Owen, Jeremy Bentham, George Jacob Holyoake, Ibsen, Björnson, Max Stirner, Buchner, Condorcet, etc.

[1] The Canon Law in England as well as the civil law in other countries, has for many centuries grievously sinned against the rights of woman. Speaking of the Canon Law, Charles Kingsley says that this will never be a good world to live in for women until the last vestige of this ecclesiastical code has been wiped out of existence. And Lord Brougham calls the Canon Law "a disgrace to civilization."

A. While in all countries and at all times woman, representing the weaker sex, has been more or less enslaved, still it appears that in ancient Egypt, Greece and Rome, she enjoyed greater privileges. In no pagan faith, for instance, is she represented as the accomplice or the instrument of the devil. This in itself is a tremendous distinction between Judaism and Christianity on the one hand, and the pagan faiths on the other.[1]

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[1] In ancient Egypt women served as priestesses. The sacred songs of Isis; the existence of women physicians and students in the land of the Nile; the Roman matron; the naming of great cities and States after women—Athenia, Europia, etc.; the Roman vestal virgins; the pagan pantheon filled with female divinities—giving God, Zeus, or Jupiter, a female comrade; Roman medallions representing husband and wife, each with the arm thrown over the shoulders of the other, united in the tomb as in life; the holding of public funerals for great women, and delivering commemorative orations for them in the forum; and the building of temples dedicated to women who had served the state, demonstrate that she enjoyed a larger liberty before the advent of the Jewish-

17. Q. State in a few words the story of woman's emancipation.

A. (1) The first step forward came with monogamy.

(2) Then the right to hold property in her own name, vastly increased her importance, and provided her with leisure and independence.

(3) This led to the conquest of new educational advantages; and one after another, schools and colleges opened their doors to her.

(4) Finally, we may mention the general decline of religious belief, which carried away with it the greater part of the prejudices against woman.

18. Q. How do you account for the fact that in spite of the injustice of

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Christian religion. The fact that all the three persons of the Trinity, and all the angelic host in the Christian heaven are masculine, is enough to prove Christianity's partiality to man.

all religions to woman, she continues to be their mainstay?

A. That is a singular, but by no means an inexplicable phenomenon. Her attachment to institutions which exploited her, and which, while exacting the greatest sacrifices from her, denied to her the rights which belong to her, is the result of training. The new education has provoked her to protest against the long slavery of the past. The number of women who are breaking away from the church is daily increasing.[1]

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[1] Mr. A. G. Wells in his "Anticipations," says that by the end of the twentieth century all cultivated people will leave the Church, but women will be as much attached to it as ever. We hope and believe that the twentieth century will prove this prediction untrue. According to the testimony of clergymen themselves, not only the men, but women and children too, are leaving the churches. Read what Rev. Dr. Boyd, of Evanston, says of the decline of churchgoing in that well known suburb. A large number of the churches have already abandoned the Sunday evening service.

CHAPTER XIX

MARRIAGE

1. Q. Speak of marriage?
   A. Marriage is not only one of the oldest and one of the most universal institutions, but it is also one of the most inevitable.
2. Q. Explain your meaning.
   A. Life is not more dependent upon food and drink and air than it is upon marriage for its perpetuation. Nature has provided for its own self-preservation by planting in all her children necessary wants, like hunger, thirst, love, etc.
3. Q. But will it be well to urge everybody to marry?
   A. No; they must be physically and mentally qualified to become the propagators of the human race.[1]

[1] The marriage of people suffering from incurable diseases should be prohibited by common consent as an

4. Q. How can the propagation or transmission of disease through marriage be prevented?

A. It is difficult to lay down dogmatic rules, but it may be suggested that the State could appoint a competent committee to certify to the physical and mental qualifications of the candidate for matrimony.

5. Q. Is that a practical suggestion?

A. At present no applicant to a place in our army or navy, or any other civil function, is admitted without an examination. The welfare of society as a whole is more important than that of any one of its subordinate divisions.

6. Q. But how may that be reconciled with personal liberty?

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anti-social act. Even as the law would arrest the man who attempted to poison the well-springs, or the food, or the air, which the people depend upon, so must it take measures in self-defense against the man who seeks to poison the blood which flows in the veins of society.

A. Liberty is a means, not an end, the end is life—sane, sweet, wholesome, harmonious, progressive life—and whatever retards or mars this end may legitimately and by *common consent* be placed under a ban.[1]

7. Q. Could the decisions of a medical bureau be always reliable?

A. No; but if we waited for an infallible committee to decide human matters we could never make any progress. Comparative security is all that such a committee could promise, and that would be a great gain.

8. Q. What is the natural history of marriage?

A. Like every other institution, marriage, as it is known today, is the

[1] If people can be convinced that the marriage of diseased people and people of confirmed criminal habits saps the health and sanity of society in general, they will not hesitate to make and to demand an individual sacrifice for the improvement as well as the perpetuation of mankind.

result of a long and slow evolution.

9. Q. Which is the best form of marriage?

A. The form of marriage which best provides for the unfolding of the affectional, æsthetic and ethical nature of man and woman, and which renders the highest service to the children, and thereby to society, and which is at the same time consistent with the largest amount of personal liberty, will in all probability survive against all rival forms of marriage, and monogamy is according to the teaching of history the best form of marriage thus far known.

10. Q. What were some of the principal forms of marriage which have obtained in the past?

A. Capture by force, when the male knocked down the female he wished to possess; promiscuity,

that is, indefinite, temporary and fugitive relation of the sexes; polyandry; polygamy, etc.

11. Q. Give some historical examples of polyandry.

A. In Thibet, a country of over thirty millions of inhabitants, the practice of assigning to one woman several brothers as joint husbands received the sanction of public opinion and the law.[1] In his History of Britain, Julius Caesar quotes the example of ten or twelve men supporting a common wife. In Hindoo literature[2] the example of five brothers wedded to the same blue-eyed girl is given.

12. Q. What was peculiar about polyandry?

A. It appears that under polyandry not the husband but the wife was the head of the household. Of the children born in this

[1] Spencer.
[2] Mahabharata.

relation, the girls alone, to the exclusion of the boys, inherited property, and descent was traced through the mother and not through the husbands. The wife or the matron was the chieftain of the tribe, and to her tent resorted, as vassals, her many husbands.[1]

13. Q. Describe the relation of the sexes known as polygamy.

A. Polygamy is the reverse of polyandry, that is, the union of many women to one man in the bonds of matrimony.

14. Q. Is polygamy now confined to the oriental nations?

A. Among some western sects, polygamy is practiced more or less, but as a religious rite.

15. Q. Explain your meaning.

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[1] A writer in a European periodical calls the era of polyandry the matriarcal age to distinguish it from the patriarchal, under which woman was reduced to slavery.

A. The Mormons in America, for instance, hold that polygamy is a divine institution and as such, obligatory. The examples of what they call God's Saints—Jacob, David, Solomon, etc., are quoted, and the teaching of Moses, etc., to prove that polygamy is a Christian institution as much in force today as ever.

16. Q. What is the attitude of the New Testament relative to polygamy?

A. In the Gospels the subject is scarcely referred to. From a passage in Paul's epistles, "Let the deacons be the husband of one wife," some have inferred that polygamy was denied only to the men engaged in religious work.

17. Q. Is there any positive command against polygamy in the New Testament?

A. There is not, from which it will not be unfair to infer that the New

Testament agrees in the main with the Old which *positively* sanctions polygamy.

18. Q. Has the institution of polygamy been beneficial to humanity?

A. Polygamy has debased woman, deprived her of nearly all human rights, confined her in a state of hopeless bondage, and exposed her to such treatment as a master would accord to a slave.

19. Q. Was polygamy in vogue during the lifetime of the founder of Christianity?

A. Polygamy prevailed all over the orient when Jesus and his apostles were preaching the new religion, and not one positive word was uttered against it.

20. Q. What are the advantages of monogamy over polygamy?

A. Polygamy is the slavery of woman; monogamy is the equality of woman. In polygamy the posi-

tion of woman is a degradation; in monogamy she is the comrade of her husband. In polygamy, woman is purchased or given away, in monogamy she may herself be the chooser; in polygamy marriage is not a moral institution but a species of licensed intercourse, a sort of commerce in women.

21. Q. What would you consider a good definition of marriage?

A. Marriage is a *mélange* of two lives, an incorporation which is not perfect unless all is held common between husband and wife. It is a sweet society for life.

"*Can man be free if woman be a slave?*"—SHELLEY.

CHAPTER XX

THE CHURCH AND MARRIAGE

1. Q. What is the teaching of the church on the subject of marriage?

   A. The church teaches that marriage is a mystery and a sacrament; a mystery because it is symbolical of the union of Christ with his church, and a sacrament because only a duly ordained priest can make it valid.[1] Civil marriages are not recognized by the church.[2]

2. Q. How do you account for the opposition of the church to civil marriages?

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[1] "For the Christian marriage is invalid without the sacrament, and there can be no sacrament of marriage without the presence of a priest . . . . It is a sacrilege on the part of the state to assume the right to unite people in marriage," etc.—Catechism, Council of Trent, page 255.

[2] "The Protestant sects have in recent years become more liberal in their attitude toward civil marriages.

A. The church is a monopoly, and as such she wishes to have exclusive rights in all the departments of life.

3. Q. How is the church a monopoly

A. Because she will not permit any other agency to represent the deity, nor will she permit the deity to save anyone except through her own instrumentality. She claims that the deity has handed over to her the keys of life and death, which has been interpreted to mean that he has abdicated in her favor.[1]

4. Q. May not other religious bodies labor to save souls?

A. No; that would be infringing upon the rights of the "only true church."

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[1] The Council of Trent declared that the authority of the church is the authority of Jesus Christ himself who is God. "L'autorite de l'Eglise est l'autorite même, de Jésus-Christ qui est Dieu."—Catechism, Council of Trent, page 400.

5. Q. What is the strongest argument in favor of the claims of the church?

   A. The credulity of the people.[1]

6. Q. In what countries is the church most prosperous?

   A. In the least advanced.[2]

7. Q. What motives has the church for condemning civil marriages?

   A. To prevent the union of a believer with an unbeliever; to secure in advance a promise that the children of the union solemnized by the church, and wherein either the wife or the husband is not a believer, shall be reared in the Christian faith; to secure admission for the priest into the new home for purposes of propaganda; to establish there the confessional, and to tax the

[1] Credulity without examination is the practice of idiots.—Mazzini.

[2] Spain, Italy, Austria, Portugal and South American countries.

newly married couple for the support of the church.[1]

8. Q. What has been the principal effect of the church control of marriage?

A. It has helped to make the priest the head of the family.

9. Q. Explain your meaning.

A. The priest, being considered necessary to the salvation of the soul, and the salvation of the soul being considered the paramount interest of life, is given an entrance into every home, and allowed to dictate to both the man and the woman how to dispose of their property, how to bring up their children, and in the case of the man, how he should vote, etc.[2]

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[1] Civil marriages of late have deprived the church of a considerable amount of her revenue, especially in France.

[2] Of course, the power of the priest is on the wane everywhere, but we are describing the power which the

10. Q. Does the teaching of the church elevate the institution of marriage?

A. It degrades it, because it claims that a nun is purer than a mother, and a celibate monk holier than a father.[1]

11. Q. Why is celibacy exalted by the church?

A. The Christian fathers attributed the fall of man to the marriage of Adam, and the salvation of man to the celibacy of Jesus.[2]

12. Q. What else?

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church claims as her right, and which she exercises whenever and wherever she can.

"The pastor who knows how to make the chords vibrate, and who holds the key of conscience, becomes more important (in the family) than the father or the husband."—The Apostles, by Renan, page 21.

[1] The Council of Trent curses those who say, "Marriage is better than celibacy." Tertullian urged young women to veil their faces to discourage marriage.—Guignebert.

[2] St. Jerome says: "The first Adam by marrying lost the world; the second Adam, by whom the world is saved, was a celibate."

A. Marriage is considered a concession to the flesh, and the flesh is on the same level with the "world" and the "devil." The weight of the influence of the New Testament is on the side of celibacy. Jesus by his example, and Paul both by example and precept, discouraged wedlock. They both believed that the world was coming to a speedy end, and that a wife and children would only be a burden.

13. Q. What other consideration led the early Christian fathers to denounce marriage?

A. Their low estimate of woman.[1]

14. Q. Sum up the position of the church on the question of marriage.

A. (1) Marriage is a sacrament, requiring the services of a priest.

(2) Marriage is a concession to the flesh, and as such not so accept-

[1] See chapter on "Christianity and Woman."

able to God as the state of virginity or celibacy.

(3) Though marriage is a sacrament for the laity, it is a sin for the clergy.

15. Q. What is a sacrament?

A. A means of grace. The communion, baptism, extreme unction, etc., are sacraments—they are supposed to confer a miraculous benefit upon the person participating in them.

16. Q. Why, then, may not a priest partake of the sacrament of marriage?

A. It is difficult to state the reasons precisely, but it must be for political rather than spiritual purposes that marriage is denied to the priesthood. To increase her power, the church created a priesthood free from every other obligation or attachment and

devoted only to the interests of the organization.[1]

17. Q. Was there a time when the priests married?

A. Before the time of Gregory VII (Hildebrand), the priests were allowed to marry.[2]

18. Q. Has the celibacy of the priesthood improved its morals?

A. History records many complaints against the morals of the priesthood.[2]

19. Q. What is the moral argument against a celibate priesthood?

A. It exposes them to tempation, and condemns a class of people to perish without issue.

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[1] Experience has demonstrated the wisdom of Pope Gregory VII, who, more than any one else, was instrumental in compelling the priesthood to assume the vows of celibacy.

[2] Frequent petitions were presented by the people to the ecclesiastical authorities to permit marriage to the priests as a protection to their wives and daughters against an incontinent priesthood. The popes were often the worst sinners in this respect.

20. Q. Explain your meaning.

A. When the priest is a man of virtue and genius, and he intentionally dies without issue, he contributes to diminish the moral power of humanity. He destroys what he has inherited. This accounts, in part, for the deterioration of the ministry. A celibate priesthood is a suicidal profession. It has been suggested that the decline of Spain was due on the one hand to her disastrous wars which killed her best citizens, and on the other hand, to the priests who abstained from marriage, leaving the lower class alone to propagate themselves.[1]

[1] A German scholar attributes the inferiority of Catholic priests to Protestant clergymen to the fact that the latter bequeath to their offspring their talents, while the Catholic ministry depends solely upon outside help.

CHAPTER XXI

DIVORCE AND THE CHURCH

1. Q. State the objections of the church to divorce.

   A. The church takes the ground that it is God who joins men and women together in wedlock, and that "what God has joined together," no man shall "put asunder."

2. Q. Is that argument sufficient to condemn divorce?

   A. No. There is no evidence that God "joins people" in marriage. If the mere fact that people marry proves that God joins them together, then, the fact that they also separate ought to prove that God "puts them asunder."

3. Q. What other arguments are there against divorce.

A. The church also quotes the authority of Jesus against divorce. Jesus said: "But I say unto you that whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced, committeth adultery."[1]

4. Q. What is the force of that argument?

A. Instead of prohibiting divorce altogether, Jesus, in the words attributed to him, seems to allow it. He evidently disagrees with the position of the church that the "marriage tie is absolutely indissoluble and can not be severed except by death,"[2] for he admits that unfaithfulness is a valid cause for divorce.

5. Q. But does Jesus permit the divorced to marry?

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[1] Matt. v, 32.

[2] Holy Council of Trent.

A. He has said so little on the subject that his position can not be clearly stated; but in the text just quoted, it seems that, while he is opposed to anyone marrying the divorced woman, he says nothing about any one marrying the divorced man, or his marrying some other woman. It has been said that these words of Jesus only strike at the woman and leave the man free.[1]

6. Q. Is it right, however, for a divorced man to marry while his first wife is still living, or for a divorced wife to marry while her first husband is still living?

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[1] Tolstoi argues that Jesus in this verse and also where he says, "Whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart."—Matt. v, 28, denounces not divorce only, but also marriage. The last verse quoted lends great support to Tolstoi's position. Jesus also recommended to those who could, to make themselves "eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake." Origen, the celebrated Christian father, followed Jesus' recommendation, and mutilated himself for the "kingdom of heaven's sake."

A. From the standpoint of the Catholic church all such marriages are forbidden, but the same church condemns also all civil and protestant marriages. The church explicitly teaches that the sacrament of marriage can not be celebrated without a priest. According to Catholic doctrine, then, ninety-nine marriages out of every hundred in this country are irreligious unions.[1]

7. Q. But does the law approve of such marriages?

A. From the legal point of view any marriage which is contracted with the consent and the knowledge of the courts enjoys the respect as well as the protection of the law.

8. Q. Is there any moral objection to the marriage of the divorced

[1] This is also the teaching of the Episcopal Church.

during the lifetime of the former husband or wife?

A. Moral considerations are more important than either the ecclesiastical or the legal. A marriage may be sanctioned both by church and law, and still be immoral.[1] An act is right or wrong according to the intention or the motive which inspires it. If the intention is honest, the act is moral, if not, the act is immoral. If the separation between husband and wife is honestly secured, and for ethical reasons, such as will be mentioned later, and a new marriage is honestly contracted, the requirements of the law are satisfied.

9. Q. But suppose it is clearly established that Jesus forbade marriage or divorce, would that settle the question?

A. No, the authority of Jesus, a Jewish

[1] Marriages for money or social prestige, for instance.

celibate monk of two thousand years ago, on questions of marriage and divorce is as negligible as his authority on the doctrine of evolution, or on the republican form of government.[1]

10. Q. How are we to know then which institution is helpful and which hurtful to man?

A. By the experience of humanity.

11. Q. Has not experience justified Jesus' position on the questions of marriage and divorce?

A. It has not. Those periods in history and the countries in which celibacy was extensively practised and divorce absolutely forbidden have been the least advanced morally or intellectually. For over a thousand years civilization was sacrificed to the life of the desert. To live with wild animals, amid environments of disease and dirt, drove the

[1] See chapter on "The Church and the Republic."

Europe which had seen the glory of Greece and Rome into bankruptcy. Immorality of the most shameless kind had sapped the vitality of nations, and provoked the invasion of barbarians. To this day, in Catholic countries, where divorce is denied, sexual morality is on a lower level than in protestant countries.[1]

12. Q. Has the Catholic church ever dissolved the marriage tie?

A. Yes; by a special dispensation, for a political favor, or for a sum of money, the pope has not hesitated to disolve the tie which has been pronounced indissoluble.[2]

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[1] In the literature of Latin countries, as well as in the conduct of their peoples, chastity does not occupy the place which it does among Anglo-Saxons.

[2] The Council of Trent pronounced anathema against those who should dare to say that the Church errs in allowing divorce for any cause besides unfaithfulness. —Hist. of Matrimonial Institutions, Howard, Vol. ii, 60.

In 1527 Margaret Tudor obtained a papal dispensa-

13. Q. Is divorce on the increase in modern society?

A. It is; and the church has not been able to prevent it, because, in the first place, she takes an unreasonably extreme position against divorce, and because, in the second place, her practice of granting divorces by special dispensation, to people who could purchase them, has laid her open to the charge of insincerity as well as of inconsistency.

14. Q. State now what could be defended as a reasonable attitude toward the question of divorce.

A. When marriage has manifestly

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tion to dissolve her marriage and enable her to marry another.

Jeaffreson, in his Brides and Bridals, calls attention to the "prodigious traffic in divorces in the sixteenth century. Practically speaking there existed a very wide liberty of divorce in the middle ages, though it existed mainly for those who were able to pay the ecclesiastical judge for finding a way through the tortuous maze of forbidding degrees."

failed, it is not worth preserving it by compulsion. It would be as wasteful to preserve the body by artificial means after the life has departed, as to preserve the semblance of marriage after its harmony or unity has been broken. No effort or sacrifice should be neglected to keep the unity intact, even as everything should be done to keep the life in the body, but when unity from marriage, or life from the body, has departed, separation is inevitable.

15. Q. Name some of the causes which justify divorce, but which the church considers insufficient.

A. Cruelty, desertion, insanity, crime, and habitual drunkenness. These justify divorce because they contribute to the degradation of the married and their children. Whenever a relation becomes immoral, it should be termi-

nated. No one has the right to degrade another. No one has the right to make another wretched.

16. Q. Can it be shown that such relations degrade the human race?

A. Dr. Maudsley of the Royal College of Physicians clearly indicates the stages of degradation brought about by all compulsory conjugal associations. The first symptoms are a predominance of nervous irritability, a proneness to sudden and uncontrollable outbreaks, and a tendency to cerebral congestion. These are followed in the succeeding generations by more serious symptoms, such as a prevailing mood of melancholia, a morbid and gloomy disposition, mental derangement, physical and moral deformities, inbecility and organic disease.

17. Q. If degrading relations between

man and woman preserved by law constitute an evil, are not frequent divorces also a great evil?

A. Decidedly. The tendency toward laxity in this matter in modern society is a menace to the greatest safe-guard of civilization,—the home.

18. Q. How do you account for this laxity?

A. It is a protest against the extreme position of the church; and, as in all reactions, the pendulum has swung to the other extreme.

19. Q. Mention some of the causes which have contributed to the increase of divorce in modern society.

A. Industrial conditions have compelled frequent moving or migration from one country or city to another, this unsettles family life. The mixed population of our great centers is another cause. The freedom of women, her economic independence, and

her intellectual progress have also contributed to the increase of divorce. She is too strong to submit to injuries as she did when she was weak. But hasty marriages are responsible for more divorces than anything else.

20. Q. Mention other causes of conjugal unhappiness.

A. (1) Because at first the married couple fail to understand each other, it must not be inferred hastily that they are not mated. Like life, love grows. Time is an essential element in harmonizing dispositions. Affection, like the fruit of trees, requires the long shining of the sun to ripen in. It should not be expected that two individuals, two separate wills, could become really united at once, or immediately after they are pronounced husband and wife.

(2) Again the impression prevails

that there should be no disagreement between married couples at all, and that any friction indicates incompatibility of temper. This is an unwarranted conclusion. It is perfectly natural, and even wholesome, that the course of love should not always run smooth. Misunderstandings arise between parent and child, between friends, and business partners, without necessitating a disruption of relations. Differences of opinion are essential to the formation of sound views. Concession and compromise are indispensable conditions of harmony. To pass by an offence is proof of nobility of nature, says Bacon.

21. Q. Is not the facility with which divorces are secured another cause for matrimonial disharmonies?

A. Yes. The knowledge that, at any time, and with little trouble a separation may be secured and new conjugal relations formed encourages disrespect for the marriage vows.

22. Q. How can this be prevented?

A. Uniform and less lax laws can do much to check the abuse, but the moral elevation of society alone can permanently correct the evil.

23. Q. Sum up this chapter on divorce.

A. "The homes that are worth preserving preserve themselves."[1] "I do not believe that divorce is a menace to the purity and sacredness of the family, but I do believe it is a menace to the infernal brutality which at times makes a hell of the holiest human relations."[2]

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[1] Mr. Stewart, United States Department of Commerce and Labor.

[2] Carrol D. Wright.

CHAPTER XXII

THE CHIEF END OF MAN

1. Q. What is the greatest thing in the world?

   A. Life with honor; for, without life, we cannot have anything else that is good.

2. Q. What, then, is the duty of man?

   A. To seek those things which increase and elevate life.

3. Q. What do we call those acts which make life larger and better?

   A. Virtues; and those which diminish and degrade life, vices.

4. Q. By what other names are they called?

   A. Right and wrong; moral and immoral; good and bad.

5. Q. How do we learn what is vice and what is virtue?

A. Through experience; the accumulated experience of humanity, as well as our own.

6. Q. Do we learn all we know about right and wrong from experience?

A. Positively all.

7. Q. Do we not need a revelation to tell us infallibly about right and wrong?

A. No. If we ourselves cannot discern the right from the wrong, a "Revelation" will be of no more help to us than to the animals.

8. Q. What other proofs could you offer that a revelation is not necessary for the purposes of the moral life?

A. A revelation is only an accident,[1] while the moral life is a law of human nature.

[1] An event which happens only once and under irregular or miraculous conditions may be termed an accident.

9. Q. What is a law?[1]

   A. An obligation imposed upon us by a higher authority.

10. Q. What constitutes authority?

   A. Superior knowledge, goodness and power.

11. Q. Give me some examples.

   A. The authority of the parent over the child; of the teacher over the pupil; of the State over the individual; of mankind over the State, and of nature, over all.

12. Q. What is nature?

   A. The sum of all the forces which keep the world in movement.

13. Q. Why is the authority of nature the highest?

   A. She is the first and oldest parent and teacher of man.

14. Q. Why obey nature?

[1] "Law" is used also in the sense of a formula, or an observed mode of action.

A. Because we have learned through the experience of ages that we *must*.[1]

15. Q. What if we do not?

A. She will replace us quickly by those who will.

16. Q. There is no alternative then?

A. None whatever.

17. Q. What provision has nature made to induce obedience to her laws?

A. She has joined together action and reaction, cause and consequence.

18. Q. Explain this.

A. To each thought, word and act nature has given the same power she has to the seed—to grow and bear fruit after their kind.

19. Q. What other means does nature employ to compel obedience?

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[1] "But I follow cheerfully
And did I not—
Weak and wretched, I must follow still."
—Epictetus.

A. She has lodged in us a representative of her authority, which we may call—"conscience."

20. Q. Analyze and define it.

A. Conscience is the mingled voices of the Past and the Future in each individual. Man is the vibrating focus of the collective experience and tendencies of the Past, and the hopes, visions and ideals of the Future—the *pressure* of the one and the *attraction* of the other find a voice in him; this voice is—conscience.[1]

21. Q. Is that the commonly accepted definition?

A. No. Many people believe conscience is "the voice of God in

[1] Our habits ally us with the past; our freedom with the future; the conflict between habit or instinct and freedom or will is the struggle between the Past and the Future for supremacy. Man is the battleground of this struggle.

Professor Clifford defines Conscience as "the accumulated instincts of the race pouring into each one of us, and overflowing as if the ocean were poured into a cup."—Page 134.

the soul;" but, as this voice is not infallible, nothing is gained by calling it the "voice of God."

22. Q. What other theories are there?

A. Some philosophers teach that conscience is a separate, spiritual faculty or organ, whose function it is intuitively to tell the right from the wrong. It is also held that there is such a thing as the Moral Law, which is eternal and absolute, and whose commandments are imperative.[1] But these are metaphysical speculations.

23. Q. What is the teaching of Evolution on this subject?

A. That just as light fashioned the eye, and sound the ear, with all their wonderful mechanism, human relations formed, through the education and experience of ages, the moral sense; and that

[1] The Categorical Imperative of **Kant** has been likened to a God *made to order*, a "deus **ex machina.**"

morality is acquired just as language, music, love or humanity.

24. Q. Why should we do the right according to this theory?

A. For its utility, beauty and joy.

25. Q. Is it obligatory to do the right?

A. Yes, if we wish the well-being of everybody as well as of ourselves.

26. Q. What is the reward of goodness and justice?

A. To be just and good.[1]

27. Q. But will we be just and good without *future* rewards and punishments?

A. If we will not, others will, and by[2]

[1] "Do you seek any greater reward?"—Epictetus.

[2] Clergymen, in this respect, have followed the example of nurses, who, to keep children out of mischief, seek to allure them by telling them many things which are not true.—Comp.: Lange's History of Materialism, IV., p. 222.

"If I did not believe in heaven and hell," said the orthodox clergyman to Dr. Ballou at a public debate, "I should lie, steal, murder."

the law of the Survival of the Fittest theirs will be the kingdom and the power and the future.

28. Q. Is the right increasing in the world?

A. Through many oscillations backward and forward, mankind is gaining steadily, though very slowly.

29. Q. Why is there still wrong and suffering in the world?

A. Because we do not obey all the laws of nature.

30. Q. Why do we not obey them?

A. Largely from ignorance.

31. Q. Is it right that we should be punished for our ignorance?

A. Yes. If it is the only way we can be made to learn and observe these laws.

32. Q. What is the thing we need most to make the world and ourselves better?

A. KNOWLEDGE; for we cannot do anything unless we know how to do it, and unless we know also that it is for our highest good to do it.[1]

33. Q. What else will knowledge do?

A. It will employ the immense forces now stagnating in ignorance, replace prejudice by sympathy, oppression and greed by justice and humanity, war and bloodshed by peace and brotherhood.

34. Q. What is the saviour of the world—the true Christ of humanity?

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[1] The aim of science is knowledge; the aim of art is action, but we can neither produce nor create without knowledge.

It is equally irrelevant to insist that a correct philosophy of life is unnecessary for the ends of Virtue. Thought or Knowledge is the seed of which Conduct is the flower and fruit. It is true, however, that our knowledge improves and increases as often as we "do" what we "know."

Charlemagne, in a letter to Sturm, the Abbot of Fulda, wrote: "Although action is better than knowledge still it is impossible to act without knowledge."

A. *Truth!* which is the most perfect knowledge we can possess; and confidence that such knowledge may be depended upon for the highest aims of life.

35. Q. What, then, is the chief end of man?

A. To seek the supreme wisdom by the reason, and practice the sovereign good by the will,[1] *and for the good of humanity.*

[1] Giordano Bruno and De Tocqueville.

THE END.

APPENDIX.

From the "Introduction" by George Jacob Holyoake, the friend and neighbor of Herbert Spencer, to the English edition of "A New Catechism."

The author of this book, M. M. Mangasarian, has the distinction of being the lecturer of the Independent Religious Society of Chicago. Mr. Mangasarian's audiences are composed of the children of Reason, of spiritual and ethical inquirers — a much rarer race than the children of Dogma.

The Rationalist Press Association has, I think, usefully resolved to give to the readers of Great Britain an opportunity of possessing this new and original Catechism.

The most difficult form of literary composition, which has the quality of interesting the reader, is undoubtedly a Catechism. The author must be an expert diver in the deep sea of polemical thought to recover essential facts, hidden in those depths. A CATECHISM is a short and easy method of obtaining definite knowledge. There are only two persons on the stage — the Questioner and the Answerer. A good Questioner is a distinct creation. He must know what information to ask for. If he be irrelevant, he is useless; if he be vague, he is impracticable. The Answerer must be

master of the subject investigated, and definite in expression. THE NEW CATECHISM has these qualities. It is the boldest, the brightest, the most varied and informing of any work of the kind extant. The principal fields of human knowledge, which the Churches have fenced round with supernatural terrors, The Catechism breaks into, cherishing what is fair and showing what has been deformed. The notes, of which there are many, both ancient and contemporary, are as striking as the text. The book is a cyclopædia of theology and reason in a nutshell.

The Questioning Spirit, whose curiosity has for its wholesome object the verification of truth, is the most effectual instrument of knowledge available to mankind. A well directed question is like a pickaxe — it liberates the gold from the superincumbent quartz. Whole systems of error sometimes fall to the ground from the force of unanswerable questions. All error has contradiction in it, which is revealed by a relevant inquiry that an artillery of counter assertions might not disclose, Arguments my be evaded, but a fair and pertinent question creates no animosity, and must be answered, since silence is a confession of error or of ignorance.

The author of this CATECHISM shows good judgment in devising questions. Answers without parade or pretension come quickly and decisively, often including unforseen information, which has the attraction of surprise. The answers do not drag along like

a heavily laden team, but flash like a message of wireless telegraphy, unhampered, unhindered, over the ocean of new thought. As suits the celerity of the age, these answers are expressed with brevity. Prodigality in words impoverishes the giver and depraves the taste of the receiver. Mr. Mangasarian, like Phocion, conquers with few men and convinces with few words. There is no better definition, says Landor, of a great captain or a great teacher.

—George Jacob Holyoake.

Eastern Lodge, Brighton, October 20th, 1902.

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M. M. MANGASARIAN, Lecturer

This Society holds its meetings every Sunday morning at 11 o'clock, in Orchestra Hall, Chicago.

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